Ottawa metro

Your essential daily news | WEEKEND, OCT. 30-NOV. 1, 2015

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It sucks — but turn back your clocks

MISSING AND MURDERED...

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Trudeau PROMISES

PART V

- GENDER PARITY
- TAXATION
- REFUGEES
- CLIMATE
- INDIGENOUS WOMEN

HOW DOES YOUR CITY COUNCIL SIZE UP?

OTTAWA CITY COUNCIL TRACKER

Find out in metroNEWS

No classes after bomb threats

CRIME

Police probing emails targeted at both French, English schools

Haley Ritchie
Metro | Ottawa

Ottawa Police spent Thursday morning investigating bomb threats made against four high schools in both the French and English school boards.

Classes at CEPEO's Louis Riel High School in Blackburn Hamlet were cancelled for the day. The board sent out an email explaining the situation to parents and students at 9:30 a.m.

Classes continued at Franco-Ouest High School in the Nepean area, but evacuation began after police identified a suspicious object around 11 a.m. The object was quickly confirmed to be safe and classes resumed.

> **Every threat we receive, we investigate.**
> Ottawa police spokesman Marc Soucy

The threats targeted multiple schools and were sent by email sometime last night, targeting specific high schools in the Ottawa-Carleton District School Board, Public School Board of Eastern Ontario and Conseil des écoles catholiques du Centre-Est.

Schools targeted in the OCDSB including Gloucester High School and Ridgemont High School were told by police to remain open and continue regular operations during the investigation, according to the board.

"Every threat we receive, we investigate," said Ottawa police spokesperson Marc Soucy.

The scare follows recent bomb threats at four Gatineau CEGEPs on Wednesday. Soucy said the Ottawa Police are working with the Gatineau police to see if there are similarities in the two emails.

An investigation into who sent the threats is still ongoing.

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metro NEWS

Your essential daily news

Stephen Harper's cats packing up to move out of 24 Sussex Dr. **Canada**

POLICE

Union calls carding rules 'alienating'

The province's draft regulations on police street checks — which will now require officers to inform people they have the right to walk away — will turn the practice into an "alienating" exercise, warns the head of the Ottawa Police Association.

Community Safety Minister Yasir Naqvi announced the new regulations Wednesday.

Individuals have always had the right to walk away from a street check, but changes to the Police Services Act will force officers to inform them of that right, said Naqvi.

But Matt Skof, president of the Ottawa Police Association, says once police preface their interaction with someone about the legalities of the conversation, it will no longer be a "fruitful" exercise.

"I think that's a very alienating statement to make to somebody if you're trying to engender some trust or some community aspect of policing into the community. You're basically assuming that there's some suspicious behaviour, and that's how I think it's going to be received by the person," he said.

> **I don't think this is going to benefit anybody.**
> Matt Skof

Ottawa police chief Charles Bordeleau said in a written statement Thursday he needed more time to review the draft regulations before he could comment on them. JOE LOFARO/METRO

YOUTH MENTAL HEALTH

Crisis growing alarmingly: Report

A new report card from the Children's Hospital of Eastern Ontario and The Royal paints a grim picture of the state of mental health in children and youth across the region.

Mental health emergency visits to CHEO have skyrocketed by 75 per cent since 2009-2010 and outpatient referrals received at the hospital have fluctuated since then, but have increased 42 from five years ago, according to the 2014-205 report.

CHEO would normally see patients with eating disorders in mid-adolescence, but now doctors are treating children as young as eight or 10 years old, Kathleen Pajer, The Royal's chief of psychiatry, said Thursday.

Self-harm cases now involve 10-year-olds, and parents are also coming to CHEO for uncontrollable behaviour in three-year-olds, whereas before the peak was four to five years old.

To deal with these alarming numbers, CHEO and The Royal consulted with 800 mental health professionals and came up with a five-year strategic plan called Young Minds in Partnership to improve access to mental health service and reduce wait times.

CHEO said it will have to reallocate resources within its organization to fund this new initiative.

JOE LOFARO/METRO

IN BRIEF

Hydro One sale will hurt Ontario budget: FAO

Ontario's new financial accountability officer warns the sale of Hydro One will have a negative impact on the province's budget balance.

Stephen LeClair's first report to the legislature suggests the province would see an improvement in its budget in the first year after an initial sale of 15 per cent of shares in the utility.

But he says the budgetary impact could be positive or negative in subsequent years as more shares are sold, and will ultimately be negative once the Liberals sell the 60 per cent of Hydro One they plan to put on market. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Ride-sharing app Uber launched in Ottawa in October 2014. METRO FILE

Uber fares best taxis, focus groups report

TRANSPORTATION

App boasts 'significantly higher' ratings by customers

Lucy Scholey
Metro | Ottawa

Those who hail car rides in Ottawa would rather tap their Uber app than call a taxi, according to several focus groups.

Research firm Core Strategies conducted the focus groups in September for the City of Ottawa's taxi bylaw review. Ride-hailing app Uber boasts "significantly higher" customer service ratings than taxis in Ottawa, reads a report stemming from the exercise.

The reasons come as little surprise: Uber is cheaper, its app is more convenient than the taxi app, and wait times tend to be shorter.

Uber also scored higher for car cleanliness, comfort and driver courtesy. Its employees are more caring, professional and engaged, "Whereas taxi drivers are often described as uncaring, spend more time on their phones, searching for their next fare…etc.," reads the report.

However, taxis won points for having proper vehicle insurance. As per city rules, cab drivers are required to carry at least $2 million of commercial and general liability insurance. However, Uber has previously argued its drivers are all properly insured and that every ride on the UberX platform is backed by $5 million of commercial auto insurance.

62%

62 per cent of the participants' "vehicle for hire rides" are with Uber, while 38 per cent are with taxis.

Despite the insurance issue, women rated Uber higher for security, while men rated taxis higher.

The city also posted a second discussion paper on taxi economics, plate values and how Uber impacts on it all.

If taxis are to compete with Uber and other similar ride-hailing models, they would need a similarly flexible fare model, especially during peak and off-peak periods.

These are the last of the research papers for the taxi bylaw review until November, when the city releases a set of policy options. A draft of the taxi bylaw review is due in December.

WITH FILES FROM TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

BUSINESS

Mellos staff told they can keep their jobs

Joe Lofaro
Metro | Ottawa

Despite public outcry on social media, a commercial realtor says it will go ahead with plans to close down Mellos diner, a fixture of the ByWard Market for more than 70 years.

After the diner's lease expires on Dec. 31, neighbouring Mexican restaurant Ace Mercado will be allowed to take over the space under a new agreement.

Mello's landlord, Domicile Commercial Management, released an email statement Thursday to clarify the circumstances surrounding the agreement and how the decision was made to allow the takeover.

When Ace Mercado moved in, it was given the option to lease adjacent spaces managed by the landlord — a common practice in commercial real estate, according to Domicile's vice-president of operations Candice Lerner-Fry.

She said the landlord then informed the Mexican eatery in September that the space at 290 Dalhousie St. would be available, but only on the condition that the owners "maintain the character of the space as a diner."

Ace Mercado also released a statement Thursday afternoon, stating the motive behind the takeover was to maintain local ownership of the diner and to avoid the restaurant becoming vacant.

"Coming into the holiday season we have no desire to see anyone go unemployed and gladly invite the current Mellos staff to stay on with the Diner as we all move forward," wrote Scott Porter, Ace Mercado's co-owner.

Ghost bikes may not linger

ACCIDENTS

Plan seeks to nix roadside memorials after 3 months

Lucy Scholey
Metro | Ottawa

A new City of Ottawa policy proposing a three-month cap on roadside memorials has cycling advocates weighing in.

Ghost bikes — old rides spray-painted white and left near the scene of a fatal accident — serve several purposes. Not only are the roadside shrines memorials for grieving family and friends, they are stark reminders to cycle and drive safely.

Plus, say advocates, they show the city may be in need of cycling infrastructure improvements.

But the draft policy, which will go before the transportation committee on Wednesday, fails to mention this, notes Alex deVries.

"The extreme view of this," said the vice-president of Citizens for Safe Cycling, "is removing the memorials is a way for the city to dismiss that problem of road safety."

The city has heard concerns that such memorials obstruct vehicular or pedestrian movement and are a visual distraction for drivers.

Because of the sensitivity of these memorials, city workers have only removed the shrines when there's "an immediate safety concern."

The new City of Ottawa policy proposes a three-month limit on roadside memorials, plus a 1.5-metre minimum from the nearest road edge. Those who want to erect a memorial would need the consent of the immediate family. And those who want a lasting reminder of a loved one can apply through the city's roadside memorial sign program — but the city would design, install, approve and maintain the marker.

Winnipeg, Mississauga, Vaughan and Calgary all have policies or bylaws permitting roadside memorials for a period of one year. Kelowna, B.C., grants a two-year grace period, while Prince Albert, Sask., allows a three-month shrine.

A ghost bike on the corner of Riverside and Bank Streets commemorates Meg Dussault, who died in 2013. LUCY SCHOLEY/METRO

> **The extreme view of this is removing the memorials is a way for the city to dismiss that problem of road safety.**
> Alex deVries

A ghost bike on the corner of Riverside and Bank streets commemorates Meg Dussault, who died in 2013.

Ottawa resident Melanie Harris died in a cycling accident in 2009 after she collided with a bus on Sussex Drive near King Edward Avenue. One of her friends put up a ghost bike in her memory.

Sarah Patridge, a cycling advocate and former member of the Vanier Community Association, said she frequently passes the Riverside and Bank Street shrine.

"The ghost bike that is there serves as a reminder for people to be safe, slow and careful when they're going through that intersection," she said. "When there is a fatality such as this, the city should be studying why did this happen and make changes to the road to prevent it from happening in the future."

REACTION

Here's how people on Twitter have been reacting to the proposed roadside memorial policy:

Lana Stewart, who writes the Modal Mom blog:
"The policy as it stands is not about pedestrian or cyclist safety. The presence of the memorials (particularly ghost bikes) is a lasting reminder of dangerous infrastructure that has not been fixed. The three-month limit attempts to reduce the presence of these 'unpleasant' reminders about our pedestrian/cycling infrastructure problems. If the city was serious about pedestrian/cyclist safety, there are more constructive ways to support a safer Ottawa."

Kevin O'Donnell, Ottwatch founder:
"The cap is bad at any length. Report already says none of the remaining ones are safety concerns. What problem is being solved? Answer: a political one. The optics of memorials at never-improved, dangerous locations are an embarrassing reminder of inaction."

@sarahgoingmodal:
"I think that they should *at least* stay up until the city fixes the infrastructure, or lack thereof, that allowed death to occur."

Cyclist and chiropractor Steve Konkle:
"Winnipeg, Mississauga and Calgary limit to one year, which I think is much more reasonable."

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TRANSPORTATION

Happy ending for commuter after his ride gets vandalized

Haley Ritchie
Metro | Ottawa

Like many public-transit users outside the core, Brian Lema starts his day commuting to the Fallowfield Park and Ride before hopping on a bus.

OC Transpo's security tips suggest locking the doors, rolling up windows and stashing valuables.

The only problem? Lema's vehicle is a bike. The only security measures available to him include a big lock, but that didn't help when he returned to the parking lot last Friday around 6 p.m. and found his bike trashed.

The front wheel was bent beyond repair, the basket was damaged and the wheels were punctured. The "Metro Mobile" — so called because Lema hands out the daily newspaper — was in rough shape.

"I filed a report with OC Transpo security, and they said the area wasn't monitored by cameras at all," said Lema. "It was a bit of a surprise. It is someone's property and it's no different than a car."

Fortunately for Lema, being a cyclist has an upside too: a community to help out. He took the bike to Cycle Salvation on Bronson Avenue, and they offered to help out for free.

"They offered me a bike after they heard my story and said the bike couldn't really be repairable," he said. "They're a wonderful organization."

5 WAYS CITY COUNCIL SCORES

Ottawa's councillors spent less time in chambers and did more rubber-stamping than other cities' councils last term. That's according to a new Council Tracker report, courtesy of the Manning Centre, released Thursday. The Calgary-based research firm combed through voting records and minutes of council meetings in Hamilton, Toronto, Ottawa and its home city. Here are five Ottawa highlights. (Of course, eight people in the previous term are no longer sitting councillors. The Manning Centre will release a new report on the current council members in February.).

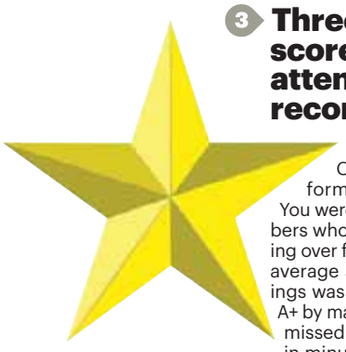
LUCY SCHOLEY/METRO

2 Council meetings were brief

A total of 180 hours and 35 minutes were logged for all four years of council meetings last term – an average of two hours and 10 minutes per meeting (public and on-camera combined). Hamilton and Toronto meetings dragged on longer, at 273 and 883 hours, respectively. It could be that most issues were exhaustively debated in committee meetings ahead of time or that decisions were made behind closed doors.

1 Mayor Jim Watson is clearly at the helm

"There is a clear super-coalition on council, centred largely around Mayor Watson," according to the report. That is, most councillors tend to vote by way of the mayor. It's hard to say why that is, as the Manning Centre refrained from any subjective reporting, sticking strictly to the voting records. In Calgary, however, there tend to be "two distinct groups," with some councillors dissenting more than others.



3 Three councillors scored perfect attendance records

Congrats Mayor Jim Watson, Coun. Marianne Wilkinson and former councillor Maria McRae. You were the only three council members who attended every single meeting over four years of the last term. The average attendance at council meetings was 96 per cent, which is still an A+ by many standards. The reasons for missed meetings were not recorded in minutes.

4 Diane Deans was an outlier

However, Coun. Diane Deans tended to vote against the majority. She only won 52.9 per cent of her votes, whereas Coun. Eli El-Chantiry won 97.1 per cent of the time. The mayor came in second place. Former councillors Diane Holmes and Rainer Bloess were also top-dissenting votes on council last term.

5 Most items before council were approved

Ottawa city council approved a whopping 99 per cent of items on the table, compared to 90 per cent in Toronto and a paltry 60 per cent in Calgary. It seems like most councillors made their decisions on how to vote before heading into council meetings. Again, it may be most issues were hashed out in committees.

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The search for answers

Each day this week, Metro is taking an in-depth look at some of the immediate items on prime minister-designate Justin Trudeau's to-do list. Today, we examine his pledge to launch a national inquiry into missing and murdered indigenous women.

Michael Woods
Metro | Ottawa

A vigil takes place in March on Parliament Hill for Loretta Saunders, a young Inuk woman who was murdered in February 2014. SEAN KILPATRICK/THE CANADIAN PRESS FILE

After years of pressure on the federal government to call an inquiry into missing and murdered indigenous women, the newly elected Liberals have promised one.

Nearly 1,200 indigenous women were murdered or went missing between 1980 and 2012, according to an RCMP report released last year.

Supporters for a national inquiry include the provincial and territorial premiers, aboriginal groups and the United Nations.

The Liberal platform promises to "immediately launch" a national public inquiry, which would "seek recommendations on concrete actions that governments, law enforcement and others can take to solve these crimes and prevent future ones."

At his news conference the day after the election last week, prime minister-designate Justin Trudeau didn't provide a specific timeline for an inquiry but said he wanted to "get moving on this quickly."

Dawn Harvard, president of the Native Women's Association of Canada, said consultations with the necessary people must start right away, but the inquiry itself shouldn't be rushed into.

"The initial process needs to start right away, but that initial process itself can take a significant amount of time just in order to make sure we get it right," Harvard said.

Any successful inquiry requires consultations with aboriginal women and their families, the larger aboriginal leadership and other relevant groups to establish the process and scope of the inquiry, she said. It's particularly important that the families of the victims have a leading role, she said.

"We're only going to get one shot at this, and we need to make sure that we have all the key voices being heard at the table to make sure we get as comprehensive a picture as possible."

That process should start as soon as cabinet is named Nov. 4, when establishing an inquiry will be a priority for the new aboriginal affairs minister.

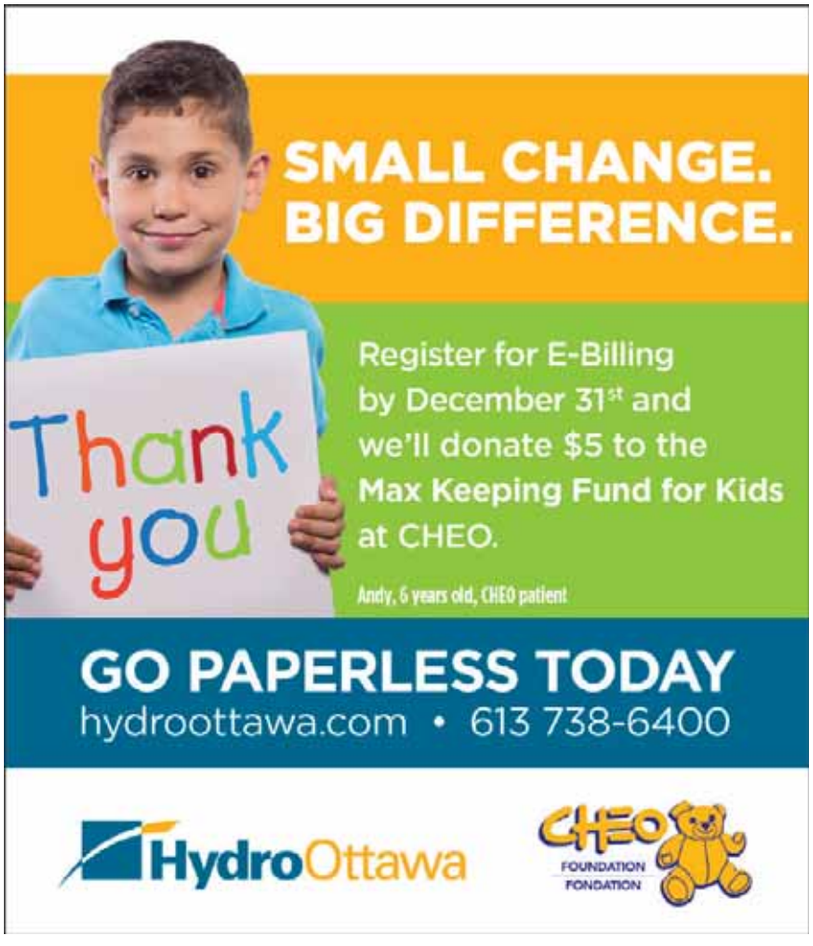
Trudeau PROMISES TRACKER

PART V

- GENDER PARITY
- TAXATION
- REFUGEES
- CLIMATE
- INDIGENOUS WOMEN

While in government, the Conservatives resisted calls for a national inquiry, saying there had already been more than 40 studies on the matter and that it is action that is needed.

There are also fears that an inquiry won't necessarily lead to action. The Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples in the 1990s took five years, cost more than $50 million and the more than 440 recommendations it produced mostly went unheeded.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FRAMED PROJECT PARLIAMENT A window opening provides a glimpse of workers as they take part in the West Block restoration and renovation on Parliament Hill in Ottawa on Thursday. SEAN KILPATRICK/THE CANADIAN PRESS

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Harper's cats pack up, too

INTERNAL AFFAIRS

Goodbye kitty: Stanley, Gypsy and chinchilla on the move

Stephen Harper is a goner — and his cats aren't coming back.

The outgoing prime minister has long been known to have a fondness for felines — indeed, prior to being elected in 2006, Harper quipped he was like one himself, because of his many political lives.

And as he prepares to begin anew as a member of the Tory backbench, so too are his cats preparing for a new life of their own. Stanley and Gypsy — along with Charlie, a pet chinchilla — are all moving out of 24 Sussex Drive to live with the Harper family at their new permanent digs in Calgary.

What's more, the many foster-animal friends living at the prime minister's official residence before the election found new homes in the summer.

The Harpers have fostered dozens of cats, as well as a number of other small animals. Eventually, they devoted an entire upstairs room to the cause.

Harper's wife Laureen was a prominent volunteer for the Ottawa Humane Society, among other things acting as the honorary chair for the organization's annual gala, the Fur Ball.

"She's been tremendous; some years she's been our most active foster volunteer," Bruce Roney, the executive director of the Ottawa Humane Society, said in a statement.

The Harpers' fondness for cats is well-documented, going as far back as their wedding where two felines were part of the party, one in a bow tie and one in a lace collar.

The death of a former cat, Cartier, was even noted by Sen. Mike Duffy in his prolific diaries that form part of the evidence in his criminal trial.

But Charlie the Chinchilla was especially prominent in the family's later political years — he was featured in the family's 2013 Christmas card and also starred in a YouTube video.

The Trudeau family isn't moving into 24 Sussex when Trudeau officially becomes prime minister next week, citing the need to be briefed on the building's condition first.

The risk of political repercussions has for decades prompted the heritage building's various residents to defer badly needed renovations, said to carry a price tag of well over $10 million.

Whether the presence of so many animals inside the home over the last nine years has contributed to the need for repairs wasn't something the National Capital Commission, which manages the property, would say. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Mayor Jim Watson joins Prime Minister Stephen Harper and his wife, Laureen, with pet cats at the opening of the Ottawa Humane Society in 2011. FRED CHARTRAND/THE CANADIAN PRESS

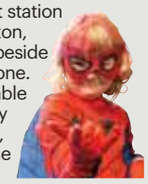
BACKGROUND

Conservative MP Deepak Obhal king of his caucus

Deepak Obhrai will helm the Conservative party caucus for the party's first post-election, post-Harper meeting next week. MPs are expected to vote on their interim leader, caucus chair, and whether to endow themselves with more powers. THE CANADIAN PRESS

HALLOWEEN NOTES

SpiderMable saves the day in Edmonton - again



The scene: two children lost at a transit station in Edmonton, standing beside a help-phone. Spider-Mable asks if they need help, presses the button, asks for help and it comes! The media event was a chance to talk Halloween safety and gave Mable, battling cancer, another chance to show her heroic side.
THE CANADIAN PRESS

Prof looks at what makes ghost hunters tick

Simon Fraser University geography prof Paul Kingsbury is embarking on a four-year research project to understand paranormal researchers. He will join supernatural investigators at a Vancouver-area heritage building this Halloween. "What we're finding so far is that people join paranormal-investigation groups because they've had profound paranormal experiences," he said.
THE CANADIAN PRESS

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Liberal Leader Justin Trudeau poses for a photo with a student while touring Mohawk College, in Hamilton, Ont., on Oct. 14. PAUL CHIASSON/THE CANADIAN PRESS

Students lobby government

LIBERALS

Youth voter turnout up by about 10 per cent since 2011

Student groups say young voters — a group that typically registers some of the lowest turnout levels in the country — cast more ballots in last week's federal election than they did four years ago.

The Canadian Alliance of Student Associations estimates that youth voter turnout was up by about 10 per cent since 2011, based on consultations with member campuses.

The exact number won't be known until Elections Canada releases detailed breakdowns of voter turnout in the coming months.

Elections Canada numbers show 70,231 people came out to special offices set up on 38 campuses during a four-day stretch prior to advance voting, which took place over the Thanksgiving long weekend.

The offices were established as part of a pilot project to get more students out to vote.

The Canadian Federation of Students said the wait time at some campuses was as long as an hour: More than 400 students crammed the special office on the Ryerson University campus in downtown Toronto on the Wednesday before the long weekend, while Memorial University in St. John's saw 1,100 students line up out the door on the last day the office was open.

CFS national chairperson Bilan Arte said the numbers help to undermine the reputation of young people as politically apathetic.

> **We need to make sure that the Trudeau government not only does what it said it would do, but actually goes beyond that**
>
> Bilan Arte

The figures have emboldened student groups to lobby the incoming Liberal government to make it easier to pay for post-secondary school and to create jobs for young people upon graduation.

Viviane Bartlett, CASA interim executive director, said students believed they had their voices heard during the election and her group "will be here to ensure the government continues to listen during their four-year mandate."

The Liberals have made sweeping promises to make it easier for students to pay for school and to get a job upon graduation.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

IN BRIEF

Federal assisted-death panel should be disbanded: Advocacy

A three-member federal panel on doctor-assisted death should be disbanded, two advocacy groups say.

Dying with Dignity Canada and the B.C. Civil Liberties Association put forward Thursday a blueprint with recommendations for leadership on physician-assisted death, including a call for the panel to halt its work.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

RAIF BADAWI

Saudi blogger wins top EU rights prize

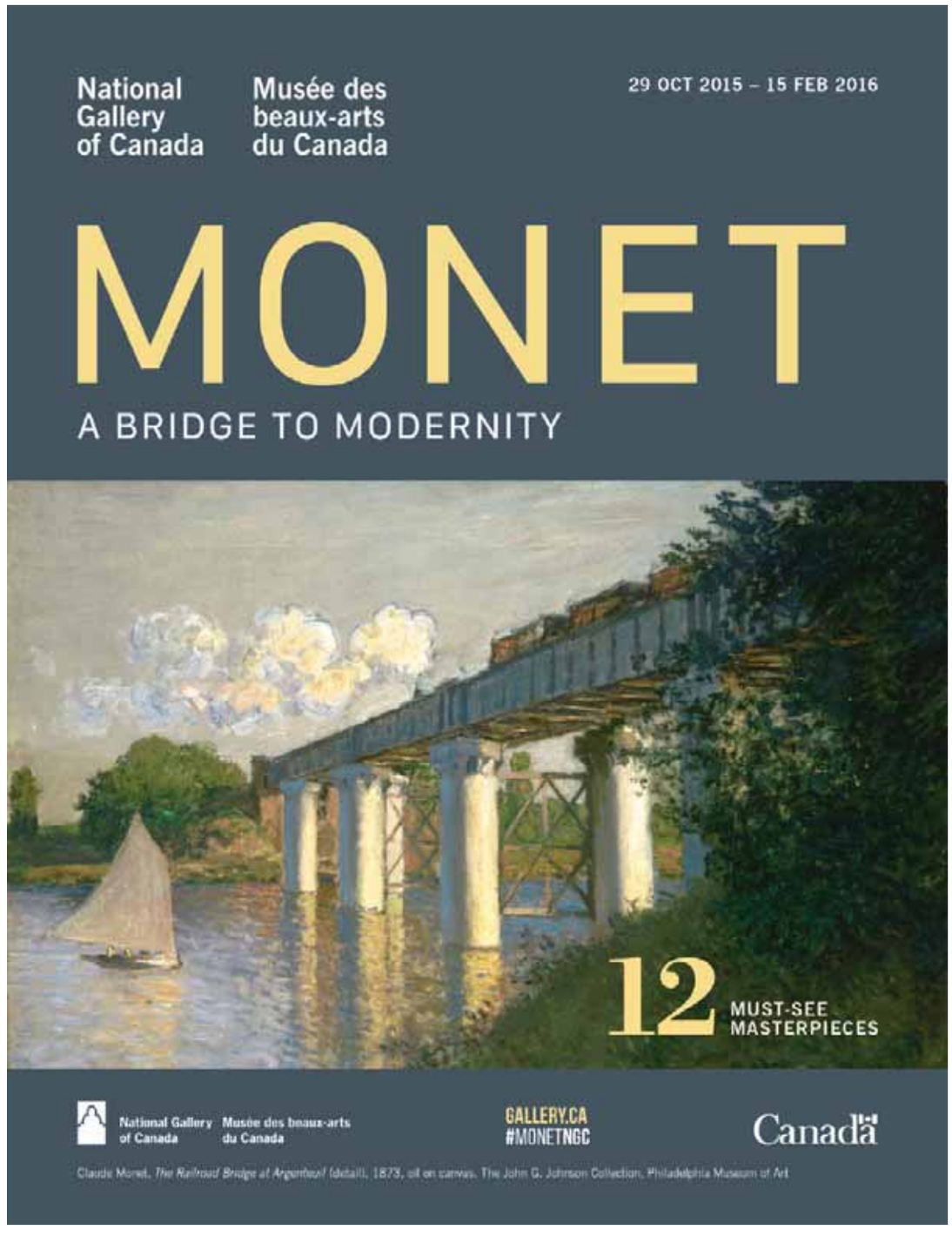
A Saudi blogger sentenced to 10 years in prison and 1,000 lashes for insulting Muslim clerics has won the European Union's prestigious Sakharov Prize for human rights.

Raif Badawi, who has lived in Quebec's Eastern Townships region since 2013 with his wife and children, was honoured with the award as a symbol of the fight for freedom of speech — an announcement greeted with a standing ovation Thursday at the European Parliament assembly in Strasbourg, France.

"I urge the king of Saudi Arabia to free him, so he can accept the prize," Parliament President Martin Schulz said.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Ensaf Haidar stands next to a poster of a book of articles written by the imprisoned Saudi blogger and Haidar's husband, Raif Badawi, on June 16, 2015 in Montreal. THE CANADIAN PRESS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Claude Monet, The Railroad Bridge at Argenteuil (detail), 1873, oil on canvas. The John G. Johnson Collection, Philadelphia Museum of Art

China to allow two children per couple

POPULATION

Decision ends unpopular one-child rule after 35 years

China said Thursday it would allow all married couples to have two children, signalling the end after 35 years to its drastic and unpopular "one-child" policy that has been blamed for skewing the gender balance, forcing women into unwanted abortions and bringing about a rapidly aging workforce.

The decision was the most significant easing of strict population policies that were long considered some of the ruling Communist Party's most onerous intrusions into family life and had been gradually relaxed in recent years. Many rural families and some urban ones were already able to have two children.

A Chinese woman plays with her grandchild at the Ritan Park in Beijing. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS FILE

The news elated 36-year-old Su Weihua of Guangzhou, who said she now plans to get pregnant next year and that she is eager for her eight-year-old daughter to have a sibling.

"I have looked forward to this for so many years — even had dreams about it! I cried every time when I woke up and realized it wasn't yet true. I thought it was so unfair," Su said.

The party's Central Committee said in a statement that the decision was "to improve the balanced development of population" and to deal with an aging population.

The official Xinhua News Agency said the proposal must be approved by the top legislature before it is enacted, which is essentially a formality.

The move may not spur a huge baby boom, however, in part because fertility rates are believed to be declining even without the policy's enforcement. Previous easings of the one-child policy have spurred fewer births than expected, and many people among China's younger generations see smaller families as ideal.

Demographers worry the change will not be in time to reverse the declining fertility rate.

China, which has the world's largest population at 1.4 billion people, introduced the one-child policy in 1979 as a temporary measure to curb a then-surging population and limit the demands for water and other resources.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

HAITI

Candidate says his ballots were destroyed

One of Haiti's top presidential candidates insisted Thursday that ballots checked with his name have been destroyed or discarded, prompting small groups of supporters to burn tire barricades in a few sections of the country's capital.

Former senator Moise Jean-Charles, candidate of the Petit Dessalines faction, is considered one of a few major contenders out of the 54 hopefuls who appeared on presidential ballots in Sunday's first-round elections. The two top finishers are expected to compete in a Dec. 27 runoff.

With official preliminary results still days away, tire-burning supporters of Jean-Charles said they discovered partially burned ballots on Thursday behind the concrete wall of a home in the Port-au-Prince neighbourhood of Delmas 41. The candidate insists that numerous ballots supporting his bid have gone missing elsewhere.

> **"This is going to lead to political turmoil.**
> Moise Jean-Charles, presidential candidate

Without discussing specifics, Jean-Charles told reporters at a Thursday press conference that there was also a plot at a tabulation centre in Port-au-Prince to prevent votes in his favour from being entered into computers.

"This is going to lead to political turmoil," he warned, prompting cheers from about three dozen backers.

The tabulation warehouse is under guard by police and U.N. peacekeepers and Haitian electoral workers are monitored by a rotating cast of international observers 24 hours a day.

Gregory Mayard-Paul, a spokesman for the Tet Kale party of outgoing President Michel Martelly, dismissed the allegations as "pure fiction."

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

GREECE

Locals rush in to rescue migrants

An autumn chill had set in when the wooden boat, packed with families from Syria and Iraq, set out on the short crossing from Turkey to the Greek island of Lesbos and the promise of a new life in Europe.

Partway across, it capsized, triggering a scene of panic, confusion — and compassion — in a dramatic rescue.

A Greek Coast Guard vessel sped to the site of the latest migrant catastrophe on Europe's doorstep. So did an array of volunteers, including Spanish lifeguards and Turkish fishermen, who crammed dozens of distraught people onto the decks of their small boats.

The Greek Coast Guard said 242 people were rescued in the operation Wednesday night, including at least 18 children. At least seven people died, and more than 30 are missing.

So far this year, more than 300,000 migrants have reached the island of Lesbos.

Manolis Galanakis, a local fisherman, said the actions of people smugglers who loaded the boats were "a crime against humanity."

"They just get money to put those people on boats to be dead," he said. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

A Syrian refugee rests after arriving at the port of Piraeus from Lesbos on Thursday. THANASSIS STAVRAKIS/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

U.S. POLITICS

Rubio, Bush trade jabs in third Republican debate

Marco Rubio bid forcefully for control of the Republican Party's establishment wing in Wednesday night's third GOP debate, deflecting jabs from Jeb Bush, who sought to right his floundering campaign.

Insurgent outsiders Donald Trump and Ben Carson at times faded to the background during the two-hour contest.

Bush targeted Rubio for his spotty voting record on Capitol Hill.

"Marco, when you signed up for this, this was a six-year term and you should be showing up for work," said Bush. "You can campaign, or just resign and let someone else take the job."

Rubio sharply dismissed Bush's critique as a political ploy by a struggling candidate.

"The only reason you're doing it is that we're running for the same position and someone has convinced you that attacking me will help you," he said. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

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Baghdad's weather woes

IRAQ

Rare heavy rain overwhelms infrastructure battered by war

People do their best to get through a flooded street after heavy rain fell in Baghdad on Thursday. KARIM KADIM/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

"Grab a boat from Baghdad and it will take you straight to Greece," reads a joke being shared on social media.

But Baghdad residents may not have been in the mood for humour after waking up to knee-deep floodwaters that seeped into homes and paralyzed parts of the city.

Blocks of ice, the type usually sold on outdoor stalls, floated down the streets of Baghdad's Sadr City neighbourhood as men trudged through muddy water, trying to assess the damage.

The rare rainstorm began late Wednesday and continued into Thursday, dumping heavy rain on the Iraqi capital and across much of the country. The Iraqi government declared Thursday a holiday to ease the burden on people who may otherwise struggle to get to work and school. The stormy weather has been forecast to continue throughout Friday and Saturday.

Police and security forces were deployed in Baghdad — a city of about 5 million people — to help citizens navigate the floodwaters.

Security forces have been stretched thin battling the Islamic State militant group since last year, so the battle with Mother Nature was something out of the ordinary.

Old and inadequate drainage systems have long been an issue in Iraq and among the complaints of citizens who have been protesting for better basic services and an end to corruption. Calls for reform have intensified since the summer, when scorching temperatures led to chronic power cuts.

Iraq's power, communications, water, sewage treatment and health facilities were severely battered during the 1991 U.S.-led Gulf War, and then again in the 2003 invasion. In between, stringent UN sanctions severely limited the country's ability to rebuild.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

SYRIA

Peace talks hinge on dictator's future

The success or failure of the Syrian peace talks this week is tied to the fate of one man who's not even at the table: President Bashar Assad.

Neither Assad nor any of his representatives are in Vienna, where U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry and senior diplomats from almost 20 other countries began negotiations Thursday. But his future is at the heart of all the talks.

Since the start of Syria's unrest four years ago, his future has been a stumbling block to all efforts aimed at ending the fighting. U.S. President Barack Obama demanded that Assad leave power in 2011. Russia resisted the push by blocking attempts at the United Nations to pressure the Syrian leader and insisting that any new government only be established by mutual consent of both the government and the opposition. That essentially gave Assad veto power over his own would-be replacements. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

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Bra-making biz supports careers

Adrienne Connelly of Hamilton (above) and Holly Myers of Portland, Oregon (below right) sew bras during a bra-making class with Beverly Johnson at her Bra-Makers Supply in Hamilton on Oct. 14. PETER POWER/THE CANADIAN PRESS

LINGERIE

School a global attraction for amateurs and pros alike

Sophie Ndala has watched her mother wrestle with ill-fitting lingerie her whole life and painstakingly alter oversize bras that nonetheless dug into her shoulders and provided little support.

With bra shopping a bust in their home country of South Africa, Ndala travelled thousands of kilometres to southern Ontario to learn how to help her mother — and maybe start a business herself.

She enrolled at Bra-Makers Supply in Hamilton, a sewing store and custom lingerie school that has grown into an international attraction for both amateurs and professionals.

For nearly two decades, the store's owner and self-described "fairy bra mother" Beverly Johnson has shown women — and the occasional man — how to handcraft bras that fit bodies of various shapes and sizes using her own patterns.

Johnson, 62, launched the school — one of the only programs of its kind — after years of leading workshops across Canada and around the world.

Between her in-person lessons and new online courses, Johnson estimates she's taught more than 30,000 people to make beautiful and supportive bras. Some have gone on to start their own businesses or teach lingerie-making themselves in stores such as The Make Den in west-end Toronto.

A recent weeklong master class on plus-size bras saw Ndala create a pale blue prototype to take home to her mother — who has large breasts but a petite frame — and replicate. If the undergarment fits, Ndala said she plans to start sewing some for others.

Several of her classmates already have their own lingerie lines and turned to Johnson to hone their skills.

"I really want to hit the mastectomy market," said Holly Myers, a custom bra-maker based in Portland, Ore.

"One of my aunts had breast cancer several years back and I'm also a Pilates instructor ... and I have quite a few clients who have mastectomies as well ... and they always complain about not being able to find cute bras and cute swimwear."

THE CANADIAN PRESS

BOOB CAMP

The school, which operates in the back of the shop, offers a range of classes from a $225 two-day introductory course to a $600 five-day "boob camp" and lessons in swimwear and corsetry. The master classes were brought in to replace a nine-week bra-making certification course after new provincial regulations forced Johnson to axe the program or register as a private career college.

SPONSORSHIP DEAL

Teen off team over fish feud

A soccer club on northern Vancouver Island has red carded a 14-year-old girl, barring her from playing on an elite team in a dispute about a sponsorship deal with a salmon-farming company.

The Upper Island Riptide club announced Thursday it could not reconcile its differences with Freyja Reed and, as a result, had "parted ways" with the teen goalkeeper.

Freyja and her mother Anissa Reed, who live in Comox, B.C., oppose open net-pen salmon farming and have been at odds with the club over a sponsorship deal announced in August with Marine Harvest Canada, one of the world's largest salmon-farming companies.

Riptide spokesman Sean Arbour said there was a "hiccup" with the Reeds over the club's code of conduct and the mother and daughter had been previously warned.

Freyja Reed THE CANADIAN PRESS

"I wish there was a manual that they gave you when you started volunteering that, 'hey, you might need to deal with this one day,' but there isn't," he said.

A club news release said the decision was "collective" and based on feedback from players, families and volunteers.

Anissa Reed said she was outraged, noting she was informed by email around the same time the news release was issued.

"They issued a press release prior to allowing me to tell her, when she's at school," she said.

Reed said she and Freyja moved to Comox so her daughter could play competitive soccer but learned about the sponsorship deal in August, months after tryouts for the team.

Reed said she set up a Facebook page questioning the sponsorship deal, and discussed her concerns with the club's steering committee. THE CANADIAN PRESS

IN BRIEF

Quebec gives billion-dollar lifeline to Bombardier

Bombardier says $1-billion US from the Quebec government will help complete development of the CSeries and restore customer faith in the delayed commercial jet program. The Montreal-based company lost US$4.9 billion, tied mostly to large writedowns. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Eleven housing markets overvalued: CMHC

A growing number of Canadian housing markets are overvalued, either because the cost of buying a home has ballooned or underlying economic conditions don't support current prices, according to a report from the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corp. THE CANADIAN PRESS

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metro VIEWS
Your essential daily news
Weekend, Oct. 30-Nov. 1, 2015

FACE OFF

Which voting system should Canada use?

Within 18 months of taking office, prime minister-designate Justin Trudeau has promised federal electoral reform. But what are our choices? Four experts weigh in.

OPTION 1 Single Transferable Vote

How it works: Each riding has multiple seats (perhaps five), and every voter ranks candidates first to last. Each person's vote counts initially toward their first choice and, as votes are counted and candidates either win or are eliminated, the vote is transferred to the voters' next-most-favourite candidate until there are five candidates left standing.
Where it's used: Ireland, Malta

CHAMPION: Nick Caruana
Ph.D. candidate, political science
University of Western Ontario

Single Transferable Vote is an effective compromise between what we like about the current system and what we want from a proportional system. It changes two things about the ballots we use. First, you rank candidates. You can choose many or just one. If your first-choice candidate comes in last, they're eliminated, and your vote counts towards your second choice, and so on. Secondly, ridings have more seats. Imagine squishing five ridings together to make one riding with five MPs. A major party will run five candidates, hoping for all the seats, while a fringe party may only run one. STV combines the local representation and accountability of the current system with better proportionality between the votes a party gets and its share of seats. And it lets voters give more information about what they want. Torn between two parties, or want to vote for a party and a local candidate you like from a different party? Rank both!

OPTION 2 Proportional Representation

How it works: Voters vote for a party, and the number of seats that go to each party is proportional to its vote share.
Where it's used: Germany, New Zealand, the Netherlands

CHAMPION: André Blaise,
Professor, political science
Université de Montréal

Proportional Representation is the only system that delivers fairness; that's its greatest virtue. The percentage of Parliament seats a party gets is more or less equal to its percentage of votes. The second-greatest virtue is that PR is flexible. You can choose the version that accounts best for your other concerns. Districts can be large or small. You could have thresholds to limit the number of parties in Parliament. You could even have a mixed system with a combination of PR and some other system. A common concern about PR is that voters want to vote directly for a local candidate. Well, it is possible to have people vote for both a party and a candidate. (An example is Mixed-Member PR, where voters vote once for a party and once for a local candidate. Additional MPs who do not represent a riding sit in the House of Commons so that the proportion of seats a party holds still matches its share of the vote). The major objection to PR is that it leads to coalition governments. That is true, but coalitions have advantages. They weaken the power of the prime minister; major decisions require approval of coalition partners. And it's not true that coalition governments are unstable. European PR governments last a similar amount of time as Canadian governments do. If you believe fairness is crucial, you should support PR.

OPTION 3 Alternative Vote

How it works: Voters rank candidates, who are usually affiliated with a party, first to last. If none gets a majority of first-choice votes, the second choices, then third choices, etc., are counted until there is a winner — one MP per riding. The party with the most MPs gets to govern.
Where it's used: Australia

CHAMPION: Laura Stephenson
Associate professor,
political science
University of Western Ontario

An alternative vote system is the best option for electoral reform. It would not have a steep learning curve for voters. AV systems are similar to our current one. Voters indicate support for individual candidates, and a single winner will represent the riding. Our ridings would not have to change, and Canadians would continue to have a local MP in Parliament. The big difference would be how voters mark ballots. Instead of a single X, they'd rank the candidates by number. When a candidate wins with less than 50 per cent of the vote, like can happen now, a majority of voters preferred someone else. This would not happen with AV. Voting for someone with no chance of winning would not mean a wasted vote — support would be redistributed to the next-preferred option until one candidate emerged with over 50 per cent of the votes. This means any winning candidate would have the support of a majority of voters — maybe not a majority of first-choice votes, but preference over other options.

OPTION 4 Status Quo: First-Past-The-Post

How it works: Voters elect a local MP, who is usually affiliated with a party. The local candidate with the most votes wins, and the party with the most winners governs.
Where it's used: Canada, the U.K., India, many others

CHAMPION: Royce Koop
Associate professor,
political studies
University of Manitoba

First-Past-The-Post is designed to produce clear winners and single-party majority governments, even without a majority of votes. Majority governments can pursue big, visionary projects like free trade and they last around four years. Remember the uncertainty and frequent elections caused by minority governments in the 2000s? FPTP also creates effective representation. If you have a problem with the federal bureaucracy, you can enlist help from your riding's MP, thanks to a clear, direct link between MPs and voters. But imagine if your riding was twice or three times as populous as now, and the MP didn't have resources to help? Or you had several MPs, and it wasn't clear who to contact? Other systems produce these outcomes. FPTP ensures accountability. By voting, many Canadians held the Conservatives accountable. The government fell. But imagine if they were defeated but remained in power, in a coalition, for decades. That's possible in other electoral systems.

ROSEMARY WESTWOOD
metroview

Docking dogs' tails? You're on the wrong side of history

The change has come — in B.C. this time, where veterinarians have voted to ban cosmetic ear cropping and tail docking for dogs.

Some breeders and dog owners aren't happy, which is unfortunate for them.

B.C. is the seventh province — and won't be the last — to outlaw cutting dogs' ears to sharp points and lopping off their tails, which supposedly gives breeds like Dobermans and Boxers their distinctive look.

This is the best kind of societal shift: originating from professionals, based on sound evidence and introduced for the welfare of the voiceless.

"I've always refused to crop," says Dr. Nicole Gallant, president of the Canadian Veterinary Medical Association, which supports the bans.

The group states that studies show cropping and docking are medically risky and offer no "welfare or medical benefit" — a claim kennel associations make. It also calls on breed associations to remove surgical modifications from their standards.

There might be "a few generations of dog who won't win in the ring" at shows, Gallant noted, but the shift "is coming."

Gallant is careful to say she assumes most owners and breeders love and care for their pets.

"A lot of this is about educating people and discussing what these surgeries are and why we're choosing not to do them," she said. "Opinions are pretty strong on this."

Indeed. The Canadian Kennel Club objects to B.C.'s ban, and owners in other provinces have claimed (unconvincingly) the bans infringe upon their rights.

The debate is an old, stubborn one: Europe is ahead of us, and the U.S. behind. But even there, states such as New York and Vermont have considered similar bans. In response, the American Kennel Club is calling on "fanciers" to pressure their senators and owners to pressure their vets.

It's not surprising a group of people dedicated to "preserving breed character" are wary of change. But there is some irony: they breed dogs to be aggressive (say, Dobermans) and then cut the dogs' floppy ears because that aggression could cause ear injuries in a fight. As for "character," google "Doberman with floppy ears" and try to find that menacing.

Surgery advocates offer varied and lengthy defences — but consider the source.

Vets have nothing to gain by upsetting breeders and owners. Breeders and owners, on the other hand, have reputations to maintain. And adopting new practices would be admitting they were wrong in the past.

Few like being wrong. But there's only one winning side here. You can lose, or you can change.

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Don't need brains to figure it out

HORROR

Modern zombie movies owe big debt to Night of the Living Dead

Richard Crouse
For Metro Canada

Night of the Living Dead has spawned nearly five decades of brain eating and head explosions, like this weekend's comedy-horror Scouts Guide to the Zombie Apocalypse. CONTRIBUTED

Movies like World War Z, Zombie Women of Satan and this weekend's comedy-horror Scouts Guide to the Zombie Apocalypse — the story of three Scouts who must bond to save their town from a zombie outbreak — owe a debt of gratitude to Night of the Living Dead.

In 1968, the story of story of people trapped in a rural Pennsylvania farmhouse trying to survive an attack by reanimated ghouls dragged a bloody new horror genre into the marketplace.

For better (see Re-Animator) and for worse (see Zombie Nightmare) the movie Rex Reed called "a classic" has spawned almost five decades of brain eating and head explosions, but according to the film's co-author John Russo, the origin of the idea was anything but sinister.

"Sometime in the winter of 1966 George Romero and I were having lunch with Richard Ricci," says Russo, then a co-partner with Romero and Russell Streiner (who has the film's most famous line, "They're coming to get you, Barbara!") in The Latent Image, a commercial television production house.

"George and I were complaining about the fickleness of our commercial clients. Richard said, 'So why don't you do something about it?' I thought about it and said, 'We oughtta be able to make something better than the crap we see on Chiller Theater.'

"George right away got excited, slammed the table with his big hand, sending bottles and glasses flying, and yelled, 'We're gonna make a movie!'"

The two batted around several ideas.

One, titled Monster Flick, was a horror comedy about teenage aliens, while another focused on flesh eating aliens.

"But we quickly discovered that we could not afford all the necessary special effects," he says, so the writing continued.

"We'd go to work late at night in separate offices, at separate typewriters," says Russo. "I said right away that our story should start in a cemetery because folks found cemeteries spooky. I was working on a script that started in a cemetery and involved aliens coming to earth in search of human flesh. But George took a break at Christmas time and came back with half of a story that started in a cemetery, and was in essence what became the first half of Night of the Living Dead. There were all the proper twists and turns and a lot of excitement, but George never said who the attackers were or why they were attacking.

"I said, 'I like this, George, but who are these attackers? You never say.' And he said he didn't know. So I said, 'It seems to me they could be dead people. But why are they attacking? What are they after?' Again, he said he didn't know. So I said, 'Why don't we use my flesh-eating idea?' And he agreed.

"So that's how the modern flesh-eating zombies were born!"

These days it doesn't take a lot of *braaaaaaaaaaaaaaains* to see the legacy of Night of the Living Dead. The ghoulish story is considered a classic, has spawned comedies like the box office hit Zombieland and hit television shows like The Walking Dead.

"We were absolutely dedicated toward making a movie that was true to its premise and the motivations of its characters, from start to finish," says Russo, adding, "[the movie] struck a primal chord in everybody, perhaps because of the atavistic memory of our species as easy prey for wild beasts, which we were for most of human history. We all carry the deep-seated fear of being devoured."

MOVIE RATINGS by Richard Crouse

SCOUTS GUIDE TO THE ZOMBIE APOCALYPSE	★★★
OUR BRAND IS CRISIS	★★★
TRUTH	★★★
SUFFRAGETTE	★★

HOW RATING WORKS
★★★★ SEE IT
★★★ WORTHWHILE
★★ UP TO YOU
★ SKIP IT

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FILM BRIEF

De Niro stars opposite Efron in Dirty Grandpa
After playing a silver-haired intern opposite Anne Hathaway, Robert De Niro's next movie role sees the actor playing a randy, recently widowed grandfather alongside Zac Efron.

In the first trailer for the film Dirty Grandpa, Efron plays De Niro's straight-laced grandson charged with driving De Niro to Boca Raton, Fla.

Along their road trip, the pair stop off at heady Spring Break party spots where granddad encourages his buttoned-up, sweater-over-the-shoulders grandson to sow his oats and end the engagement to his stuck-up fiancé, played by Julianne Hough.

Dirty Grandpa hits theatres Jan. 22. AFP

Robert De Niro and Zac Efron in Dirty Grandpa. AFP

THE TV DINNER JESSICA ALLEN

A classic baseball-themed movie as cinematic as Bautista's bat flip? We both knew what we craved: The Natural

Last Friday night, we caught bits of Game 6 — you know, the one between the Toronto Blue Jays and the Kansas City Royals? — on AM radio in our cab ride home from an event. Actually, we made one pit stop to get burritos where we witnessed Royals' third baseman Mike Moustakas make a formidable catch from a ground fly that caused Simon to pause. "That's gotta feel better than sex," he said.

The Jays may have lost, but the country feels united. And we, at least, still have baseball on the brain.

That meant one thing: watch a classic baseball-themed movie as cinematic as Bautista's bat flip. There was much discussion: Should we start Ken Burns' 11-part documentary on the game? Or, were we in the mood for something a little more lighthearted, like Bull Durham, A League of Their Own or Major League?

Nope. We both knew what we craved: The Natural — and not just because one of us (him) is obsessed with Robert Redford's hair. The 1984 film is dear to me. It introduced me to Richard Farnsworth, who can break your heart with a single glance of his glossy blue eyes. It confirmed my love of sports movies, a passion which '79's Breaking Away launched. And, I think the film, beautifully shot by Caleb Deschanel, inspired my dad — who's more into Bach and Bertrand Russell than baseball — to play catch with me. Even during my teenage years, when I knew everything, we'd go into the backyard with our well-worn gloves and toss the ball around under sun sparkle.

THE MOVIE: The Natural

THE MEAL: Hotdogs

It'd had been a while since we'd seen The Natural. It has also been some time since we've eaten hot dogs for dinner. But the combination was a no-brainer. Here's the thing though: I don't like fat or fancy hot dogs. I only eat Schneiders Red Hots, preferably burnt to a carcinogenic crisp over a fire. But Simon only likes Schneiders Juicy Jumbos. So we bought both.

Simon's favourite way to prepare hotdogs is to broil them in the oven. Because his experience with wieners is vastly greater than mine, I conceded. The toppings? Yellow mustard and raw sweet onion. That's it.

And the movie? It was just as weird as I remembered it, although this time around Roy Hobbs' Odyssean-like voyage was more obvious because I didn't know who Homer was when I was 10.

The Natural shouldn't be as good as it is. A near mythical, magical bat cut from a tree that was struck by lightening? Are you kidding me? Good versus evil in the form of patient Penelope and a couple of evil-siren-like women? Get out of town! And that finale when Hobbs rounds the bases after hitting a homer that causes the scoreboard lights to come crashing down around him in a shower of effervescent glory while Randy Newman's Oscar-nominated score sweeps up your very soul? Come on!

And yet, like the game itself, somehow it is capable of becoming this canvas for the purest — and by that I mean the most irrational and beautiful — human emotions. It shouldn't mean that much. But it does. And we do a disservice to ourselves, and to the game, when we attempt to figure out why.

Jessica Allen is the digital correspondent on CTV's The Social.

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Now playing

DRAMA/COMEDY

Our Brand is Crisis

Director: David Gordon Green
Starring: Sandra Bullock, Billy Bob Thornton

Sandra Bullock stars in this political comedy drama from Warner Bros. and director David Gordon Green, and inspired by the documentary of the same name, an expose of a bungled American election campaign in South America.

ROTTEN TOMATOES™ SCORE

Critics:	Audience:
39%	86%

HORROR/COMEDY

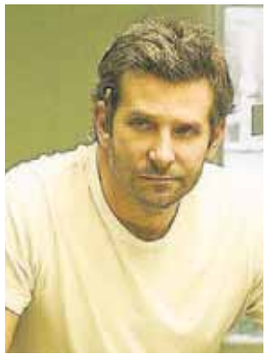
Scouts Guide to the Zombie Apocalypse

Director: Christopher Landon
Starring: Tye Sheridan, David Koechner

Three friends who are scouts battle zombies and attempt to save their town from the undead.

ROTTEN TOMATOES™ SCORE

Critics:	Audience:
NOT YET REVIEWED	89%



COMEDY

Burnt

Director: John Wells
Starring: Bradley Cooper, Sienna Miller

Chef Adam Jones had it all — and lost it. A two-star Michelin rockstar with the bad habits to match, the former enfant terrible of the Paris restaurant scene did everything different every time out, and only ever cared about the thrill of creating explosions of taste.

ROTTEN TOMATOES™ SCORE

Critics:	Audience:
34%	56%

DRAMA

Coming Home

Director: Yimou Zhang
Starring: Li Gong, Chen Daoming

Lu Yanshi (Chen Daoming) and Feng Wanyu (Gong Li) are a devoted couple forced to separate when Lu is arrested and sent to a labor camp as a political prisoner, just as his wife is injured in an accident. Released during the last days of the Cultural Revolution, he returns home to find that his beloved wife has amnesia and remembers little of her past.

ROTTEN TOMATOES™ SCORE

Critics:	Audience:
93%	83%

ACTION & ADVENTURE

The Last Witch Hunter

Director: Breck Eisner
Starring: Vin Diesel, Elijah Wood, Rose Leslie

The modern world holds many secrets, but the most astounding secret of all is that witches still live amongst us; vicious supernatural creatures intent on unleashing the Black Death upon the world.

ROTTEN TOMATOES™ SCORE

Critics:	Audience:
15%	52%

DRAMA

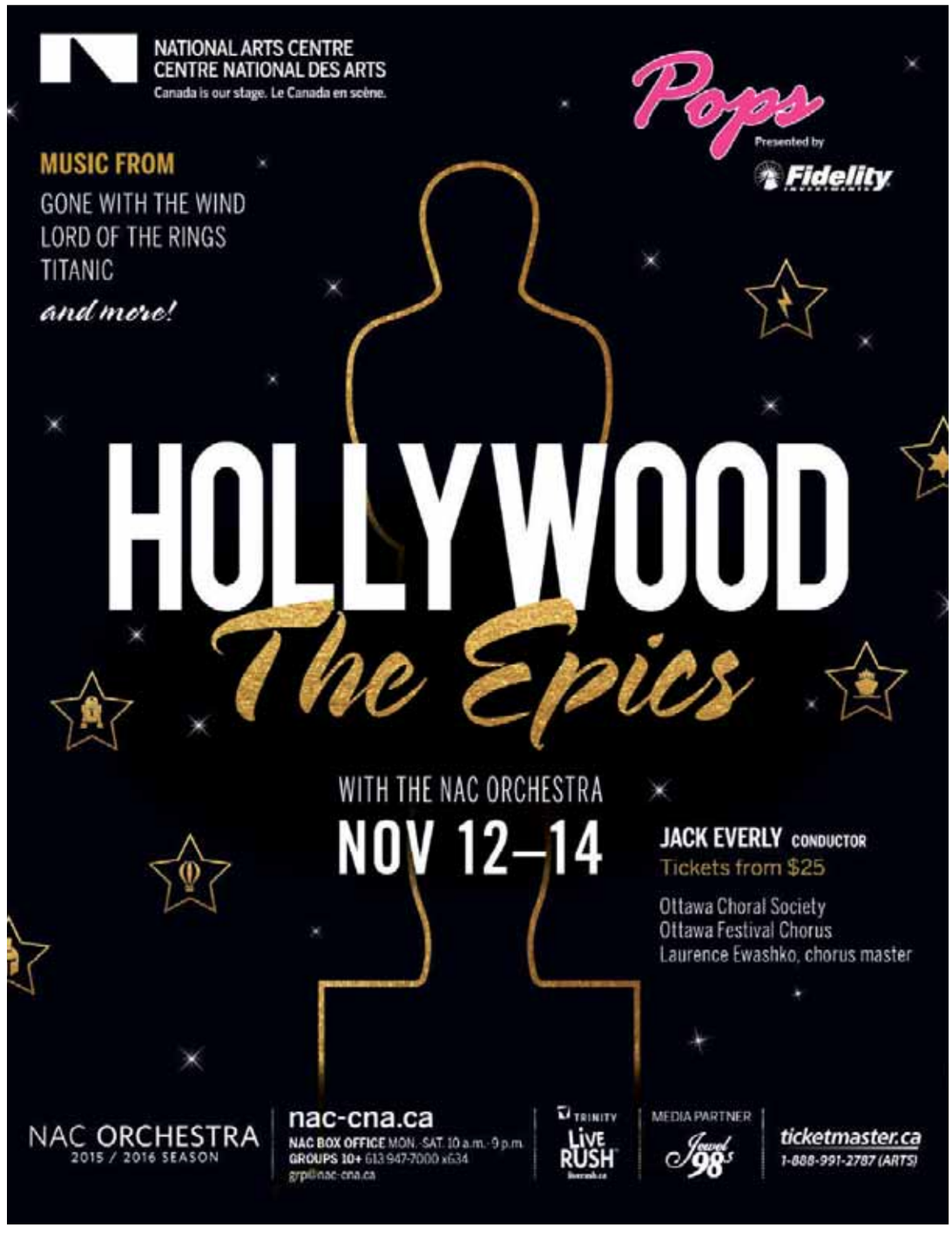
Rock the Kasbah

Director: Barry Levinson
Starring: Bill Murray, Scott Caan, Bruce Willis

Rock the Kasbah is the story of "Richie Lanz," a has-been rock manager who takes his last remaining client on a USO tour of Afghanistan. Richie discovers a young girl with an extraordinary voice.

ROTTEN TOMATOES™ SCORE

Critics:	Audience:
8%	40%



Sandra Bullock plays a ruthless political adviser in the satire Our Brand is Crisis. HANDOUT

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Never mind the bollocks: Bullock plays politics

OUR BRAND IS CRISIS

After string of 'wife' offers, actress takes a role written for a man

Is she going to be hot?

That's the question a studio executive asked Sandra Bullock about the lead character in a project she was pitching well into her Hollywood career.

"I looked at him and I go, 'Well, it is me, so you get what you get. You do realize that I'm pitching this for me?"' recalled Bullock in a recent interview. "He goes, 'Yeah, but I want to know, like, what is she going to wear?"'

Things have gotten a little better since then. In Our Brand is Crisis, out Friday, Bullock plays a role originally written for a man, and no one checked in to see whether or not the savvy political consultant character was going to be a bombshell, too.

But this is the exception. Bullock's conversation with the studio executive remains an all-too familiar scene for actresses in Hollywood, where sexist presumptions are engrained in the culture.

Then there's the matter of substance with roles for women. Bullock can't remember how many times she's had to listen to a writer try to explain how "the wife" is really the heart of the movie.

"I know what that means. That means you're going to be underwritten and you're just going to be the wife waking up in bed with the husband and making the coffee," she said. "If you say that I'm the heart of the piece, I'm going to (expletive) clock you."

That's why Bullock and her agent started looking at roles for men.

After all, male characters don't always have to be likable. Their comedies don't have to be of the romantic variety. And the first question from studio executives probably isn't going to be "Is he hot?"

When Bullock read the unproduced screenplay for Our Brand is Crisis, she decided to call longtime friends George Clooney and producer Grant Heslov to see if there was any chance they might consider her for the lead — an amoral, Sun Tzu-quoting political consultant who's come out of retirement for a showdown with an old rival.

They said yes.

To adapt the part, they changed around some pronouns, they gave the character a woman's name, and they added some sexual innuendos with her foe (Billy Bob Thornton). But overall, it remained as originally written.

Part of that is the strength of screenwriter Peter Straughan's script, said Thornton. The transition from male to female was easy because it was never a type to begin with — the gender was almost incidental.

"I tend as a writer to not identify characters unless there's a reason for it," said Thornton. "(Straughan) wrote it as a person."

From there, director David Gordon Green and his actors could focus on the big ideas in this satirical story about a failing Bolivian presidential candidate and the American lackeys hired to try to manipulate his image and a country for the win.

As someone whose father worked in the Pentagon, Bullock understands the allure of stories about the underbelly of politics. The do-anything candidates and unscrupulous mercenaries in Our Brand is Crisis are especially resonant now, she notes.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

> **You're just going to be underwritten and you're just going to be the wife waking up in bed with the husband and making the coffee.**
>
> Sandra Bullock, on her reaction when a writer says "the wife" is the heart of the movie.

Redford as Rather brings home Truth

JAMES VANDERBILT

Director draws on acting legend to play famous news anchor

Richard Crouse
For Metro Canada

Who do you get to play an icon? If you are James Vanderbilt, director of Truth, you hire another icon.

The story of 60 Minutes producer Mary Mapes and legendary news anchor Dan Rather's journalistic examination into President George W. Bush's military service features Robert Redford as one of the most famous reporters of the twentieth century. "The movie's big buy is, 'Are you going to see Redford all the way through or are you going to see Rather?'" says Vanderbilt.

"Redford is a phenomenal actor but what he brings into a scene by just being present (is a) gravitational pull. The room turns toward him. Getting to know Dan, that's what Dan Rather is like. When Dan Rather walks into a room, the same thing happens.

"Everybody turns into, in a good way, a teenager, because those are both voices who have been in your living room for 30 to 40 years. It's a voice of God thing they both have and that's why I really wanted Bob to do it."

Vanderbilt says the legendary actor is "very easy going, the nicest guy you'll ever meet," but nonetheless made people on the set nervous.

"We had heads of departments who had been working in film for 30 years who couldn't call him Bob. He would say, 'Call me Bob,' and they would say, 'I'm sorry, I can't do that Mr. Redford. I'm very sorry that is not going to happen.'"

Vanderbilt is best known as a screenwriter, penning the scripts for The Amazing Spider-Man, Zodiac, White House Down and the upcoming Independence Day 2.

His screenplay for Truth is based on Mapes' memoir Truth and Duty and reveals a time before journalism was driven by ad sales and click-throughs.

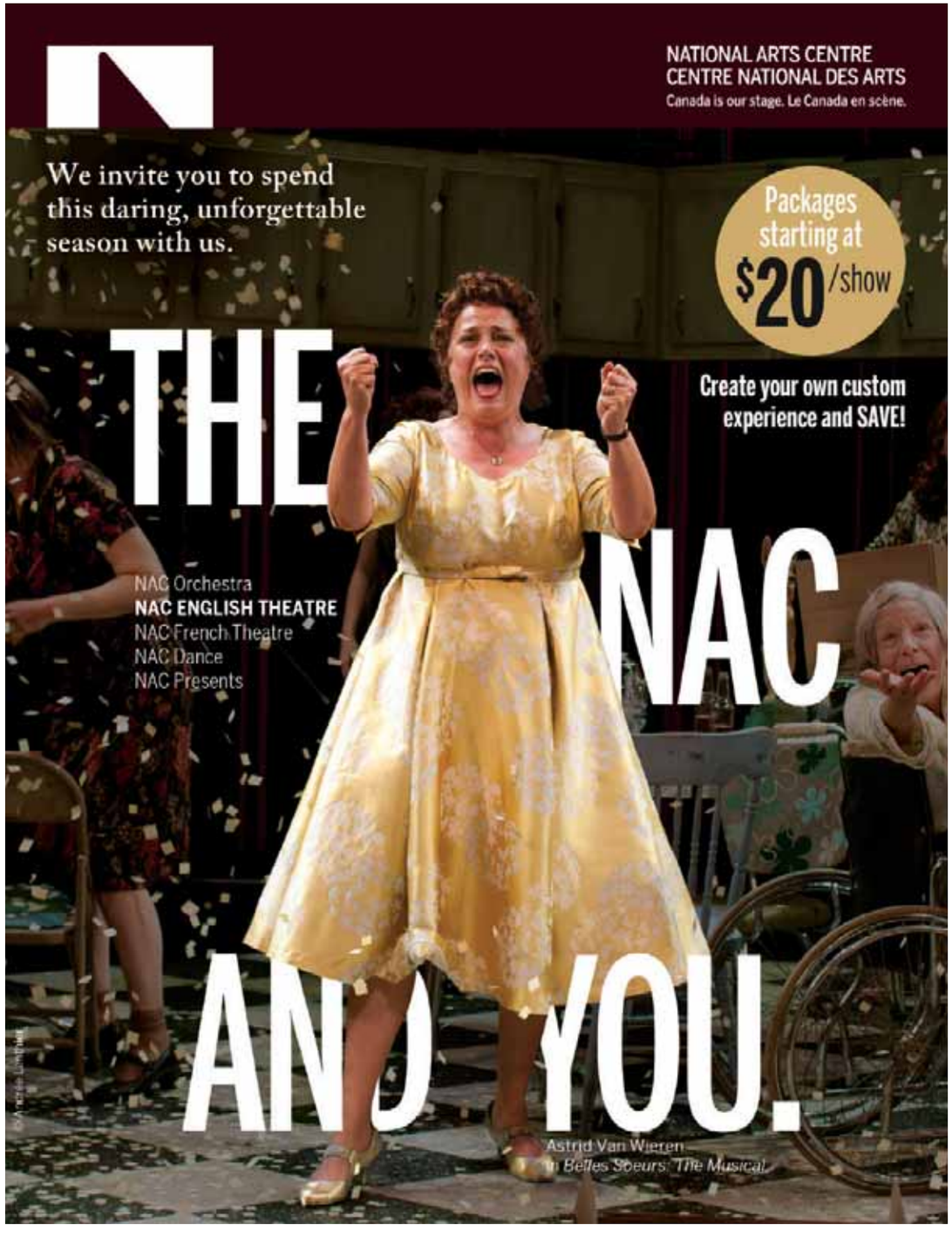
"It was pre iPhone," he says. "It was a year before the iPhone came out and that is such a big thing in terms of how we connect to one another now. How we relate to each other. Journalists and everybody. It felt like a fulcrum point, kind of where we had been, journalistically, and where we are now."

His research into the story gave the director a new respect for journalists.

"I think it is a very noble profession but maybe I'm a very pie in the sky guy," he says. "I think the more young people who grow up and go, 'This is what I want to be. I want to ask questions of power,' the better. I think we, as a society, are better that way."

"The notion of long-form ideas, long-form journalism doesn't really exist in television anymore, in the way it did when Mary and Dan were at CBS."
Actress Cate Blanchett, who plays 60 Minutes producer Mary Mapes, tells Metro

Cate Blanchett and Bruce Greenwood in a scene from Truth, directed by James Vanderbilt. CONTRIBUTED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Cooper shows off his chops

BURNT

Actor realized pre-existing cooking skills wouldn't cut it

Bradley Cooper plays a high-octane, drug-addicted top chef in Burnt. HANDOUT

Bradley Cooper wasn't a novice to the kitchen when he decided to take on the role of the fictional Michelin star chef Adam Jones in Burnt.

He grew up in a food loving home near Philadelphia — some of his favourite memories are of his grandmother making pizza, cheesecakes and homemade raviolis. He was a bus boy at a Greek restaurant there, a waiter at a fancy establishment near Georgetown University, and a prep cook at an Italian and seafood place in Somers Point, New Jersey.

One day, he said, he cut and cleaned 620 chickens and nine boxes of peppers in addition to making the dough and sauces.

But he didn't tell anyone that when he started rubbing elbows with the Michelin calibre cooks he needed to learn from for this role.

"They wouldn't have cared," said Cooper, laughing. Besides, he needed to get down to work if he was going to believably portray this top chef seeking a third Michelin star. Whatever knife proficiency he thought he had wasn't exactly going to cut it under the scrutiny of professionals.

In Burnt, out Friday, not only is Adam Jones a savant in the kitchen; he's also got a drug habit that's left him an exile in the world of haute cuisine. While the drugs are under control for the moment, his temper is another story. Who better to learn from than the stormy Gordon Ramsay?

Cooper trained alongside Claire Smythe, executive chef of London's Restaurant Gordon Ramsay, which has three Michelin stars, for "many, many services," said director John Wells.

"All the actors had to spend the time to get fluent in the craft — not fluent enough to serve 100 meals, but fluent enough where someone else who knows how to do it wouldn't think they look ridiculous."

When it got down to shooting, they chose the authentic over the artificial.

BBC TV Master Chef presenter Marcus Wareing was behind the camera, both designing the menus and keeping an eye on everyone's technique.

The actors felt the stress and the pain of working in a real kitchen too — sometimes literally, with cuts and burns.

"That's real sweat. My eyes were bloodshot for half the movie. It was all real. For an actor, that was amazing. There was no stunt double. There was no insert of another person's hands," said Cooper.

Being No. 1 on the call sheet isn't unlike being the head of a kitchen, too. Cooper needed to set the tone of the operation.

"He did exactly what any director would want him to do. He was fully prepared, had done all of his research, knew all of his lines and showed up ready to work and was as demanding as Adam," said Wells. "He was the first person on the set and the last person off."

The seriousness with which Cooper approached the role reminded Wells of another actor he'd worked with recently: Meryl Streep.

He remembers showing up for a read through of August: Osage County and Streep was already off book.

"Everyone else was like, 'Oh, uh oh, it's going to be like that, is it?' And that was the same with Bradley," he said.

"Bradley, because he's so damn good looking, people don't realize that he's really smart — fiercely intelligent. He questions things and you and everyone else had better be prepared."

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Q&A

Cooper talks audience expectations and how real the kitchen experience was.

With the amount of reality and scripted shows about chefs, do you expect a certain level of pre-existing knowledge from audiences these days?

It's a very educated audience, and we were very aware of that. We were very conscious that we have to be as authentic as we can because people are going to be able to smell it out in two seconds ... in terms of the back of the house being documented on the Food Network, whole channels dedicated to it, that's all over the place.

How realistic was your kitchen set-up for this?

That's a functioning kitchen. Every shot, that's me doing it for better or for worse. All the other extras that you see in the kitchen, those were all chefs who work in Michelin-starred restaurants. None of them were actors aside from Omar, Ricardo, Sienna and Sam. The rest were all chefs.

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Experiencing Gullah culture

BEAUFORT, S.C.

Painting class, foot-stomping musical evoke region's past

Mike Dojc
For Metro Canada

The Gullah are the descendants of the people of the rice coast regions of Western Africa who were stripped of their freedom, herded onto slave ships, and imported as chattel to the Lowcountry of South Carolina and Georgia. They were liberated the first year of the Civil War following the battle of Port Royal and remained in the Beaufort area, where decades of rural isolation preserved their African-American Gullah culture.

Whispers of the past can still be heard when staring out at the vast salt marshes from the waterfront — a view undisturbed by the passage of time — or walking down the town's shady residential streets through a towering and twisted canopy of live oaks festooned with Spanish moss that rustles in the breeze.

The porch ceilings of stately antebellum homes are painted a soft, pale "haint blue," a stylistic flourish that arose from Gullah ghostbusting tradition. The cooling colour is believed to ward off "haints" or evil spirits. According to Gullah superstition, lost souls up to no good are as afraid of water as the Wicked Witch of the West. Beaufort's bubbling art scene with galleries dotting the downtown core also serves as a visual bridge to the past.

SUPERSTITION
Porch ceilings in the South Carolina Lowcountry are commonly painted "haint blue," a colour believed to ward off evil spirits.

Creative freedom

"I had two types of grandmothers. I had that really sweet grandmother who would teach me how to bake cakes. Then I had that grandmother who would teach me how to go get a switch," riffs Sonja Griffins Evans, an acclaimed Gullah culture artist.

She's pointing to a work of hers depicting a young girl with her hands clasped and her guardian behind her in a matching white dress. "When I first painted it I thought this is Nana's baby." We're in the courtyard of the Beaufort Arsenal, a castle-like fortification constructed in 1799, about to dip our brushes and have at it in a painting class.

Gullah paintings tend to employ bright, vibrant colours in their depictions of post-emancipation community life, and figures are often faceless. Evans steers us to follow our own path but shepherds the artistic process by urging pupils to pick out one colour that is personally meaningful and then blanket our canvas with it to serve as a backdrop.

After choosing a dark shade of green and making a few muddy brushstrokes she glances at my work in progress and intuits correctly that I'm "a bit of a nature guy." Later she takes a look and envisions a red-roofed structure in my painting's future, another prescient forecast.

Evans' work can be found at Scout Southern Market (709 Bay St.), a home decor shop where you can sip on a mint mojito sweet tea float while browsing hand-hammered copper pitchers, porch bed swings, and spoon-laden chandeliers.

For a wide variety of Gullah, African and low-country folk art, LyBensons Gallery and Studio (211 Charles St.) carries everything from sweetgrass baskets and wood burnings, to works depicting Gullah icon Robert Smalls, the slave-turned-ship captain and eventual five-term congressman.

The view from the third-floor balcony of the Anchorage 1770 inn in Beaufort, S.C. CONTRIBUTED

Aunt Pearlie Sue of Aunt Pearlie Sue and The Gullah Kinfolk performs for guests. MIKE DOJC/FOR METRO

Painting by Sonja Griffins Evans. MIKE DOJC/FOR METRO

A Gullah night on the town

The first Friday in December will ring in the Yuletide season on the South Carolina Sea Islands with a stirring rendition of The Gullah Kinfolk: Christmas Wish … Freedom Coming at the University of South Carolina-Beaufort's Performing Arts Center. Connect with Gullah culture through a dazzling, foot-stomping musical bringing alive the excitement of December of 1860, the last Christmas holiday before the Civil War.

Coinciding with the stirring theatrical performance is the Taste of Gullah Soulfood Buffet where local caterers serve up collards, candied yams, gumbo, red rice and other rib-sticking favourites. There will also be an artist showcase and market.

Some travel and accommodation costs were courtesy of the Beaufort Regional Chamber of Commerce.

Orlando beyond the theme parks

FLORIDA

10 fun things you can do in the city, from arts to wildlife

Mark Stachiew
For Metro Canada

Many Canadians never venture beyond the walls of Orlando's famous theme parks, but those who do will discover an exciting range of experiences in the Florida city that just might surprise them.

1 Ride the Orlando Eye
It only opened last year, but this gigantic Ferris wheel has become an instant Orlando icon. Take a sunset ride on this engineering wonder and marvel at the panoramic views below.

2 Look for gators
You don't have to go all the way to the Everglades to see alligators. Just 30 minutes from town, you can take an airboat tour that will let you see gators and other wildlife in their natural habitat.

3 Ride an Amphicar
At the Boathouse Restaurant in Disney Springs, a sprawling shopping, dining and entertainment district, you can take a one-of-a-kind tour of the nearby lake in an Amphicar, a 1960s-era amphibious car of which only a few hundred remain in the world.

4 Enjoy fine dining
Foodies love Orlando's restaurant scene. It attracts celebrity chefs from around the world and is home to some local chefs who are making names for themselves. Whether you prefer Southern barbecue, Asian fusion or farm-to-fork, just about any type of cuisine you can think of can be found here.

The Orlando Eye has become an instant icon of the city. HANDOUT

5 Go up in a hot-air balloon
The Orlando Eye is not the only way to get a bird's-eye view of the sprawling city and the area around it. Visitors can experience a sunrise ride in a hot-air balloon that transports them above the ground at a leisurely pace.

6 See the fishes
SEA LIFE Aquarium is the perfect place to bring the kids on a rainy day or on those days that it's so hot that you want to do something inside. This colourful aquarium is a lot of fun and children won't even notice that it's educational.

7 Get close to celebrities
Madame Tussaud's Wax Museum lets you get up close to their celebrity figures. You'll be amazed at their resemblance to the real thing and may even be surprised at just how tall (or short) some of them are. Selfies are encouraged!

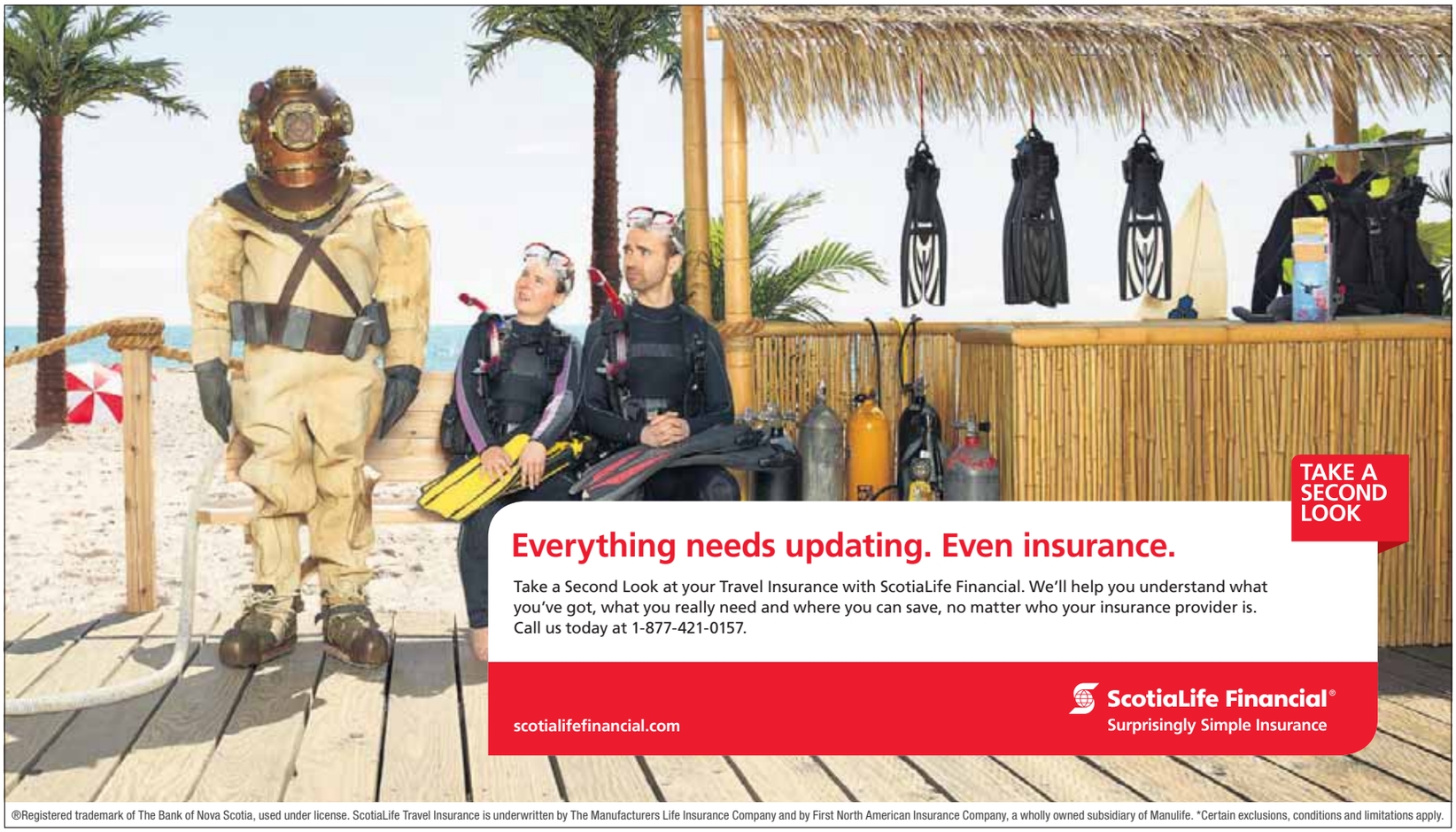
8 Peek into the backyards of the rich
For a century, the swanky Orlando neighbourhood of Winter Garden was the winter home to many rich, northern industrialists. Their stately waterfront homes are still favoured by the rich and famous and ordinary folks can get a peek by taking a boat tour that passes by their properties.

9 Go to a show
The newly opened Dr. Phillips Center for the Performing Arts is a stunning, state-of-the-art concert venue in downtown Orlando that hosts live music, broadway musicals, theatre, comedy and much more. Check their schedule to see what's playing when you are in town.

10 Admire some Tiffany glass
The glass masterpieces of Louis Tiffany are preserved at the Charles Hosmer Morse Museum of American Art in Winter Park. It is the most important collection of this art nouveau master best known for his colourful lamps.

The writer was a guest of Visit Orlando, which did not review nor approve the story.

ONLINE
For more ideas, check out visitorlando.com.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London thrilled by new Bond exhibit

ON THE MOVE

Displays range from fast rides to a crocodile submarine

Loren Christie
For Metro Canada

The Brits love their Bond.

"He is very much a British cultural icon. Everybody has grown up with him: kids, parents and even grandparents," explains Rachel Stewardson, a tour guide at the London Film Museum.

On until March 2016, the museum's Bond in Motion exhibit, a collection of James Bond vehicles, has been wildly popular with locals and tourists alike. With the launch of the latest Bond flick, Spectre, Stewardson expects the exhibit will be extended for another year.

The most popular vehicle here is the classic Bond car, the Aston Martin. The DB5 used in Goldeneye is displayed prominently and a one-third scale model of the same make, used in Skyfall, gives visitors a glimpse into the magic of movie-making.

You quickly learn that many other Aston Martins have played a part in the Bond world: the V12 Vanquish from Die Another Day, the V8 from The Living Daylights, and even the wreckage of the DBS used in Casino Royale, which broke a Guinness world record for the number of flips (seven and three-quarters rotation) taken by a stunt driver during filming.

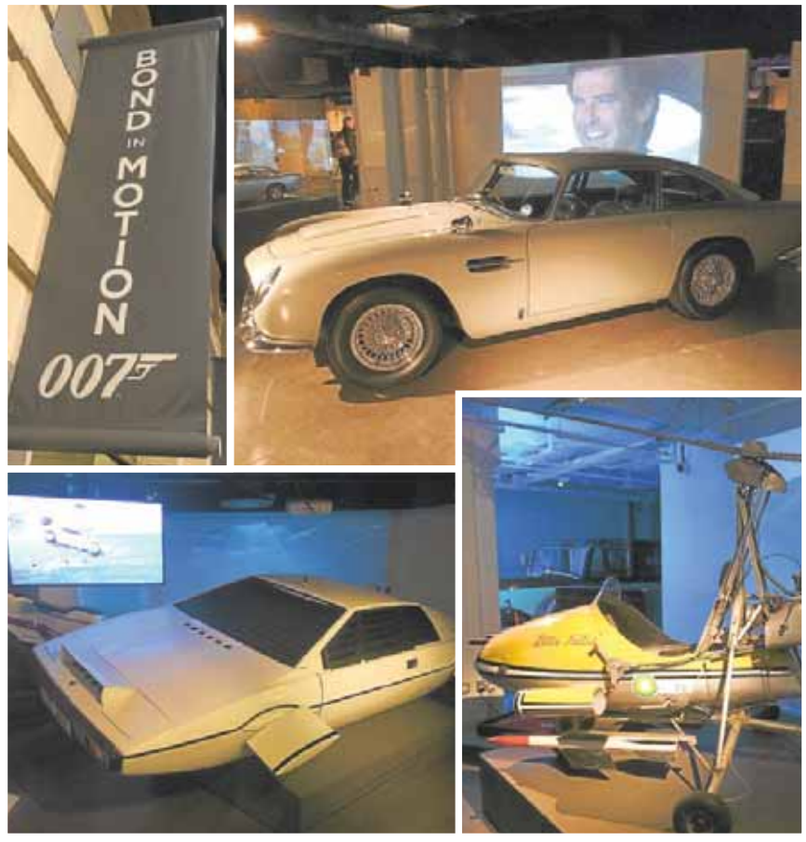
Another highlight is the Lotus Esprit S1 from the Spy Who Loved Me. Remember the scene where Bond and his Russian spy love interest, pursued by a gun-blazing helicopter, go flying off a pier into the water? When the car transforms into a submersible laden with Q-supplied gadgets, you can't help but cheer for the suave spy.

"The museum does an excellent job of immersing you into the world of Bond."

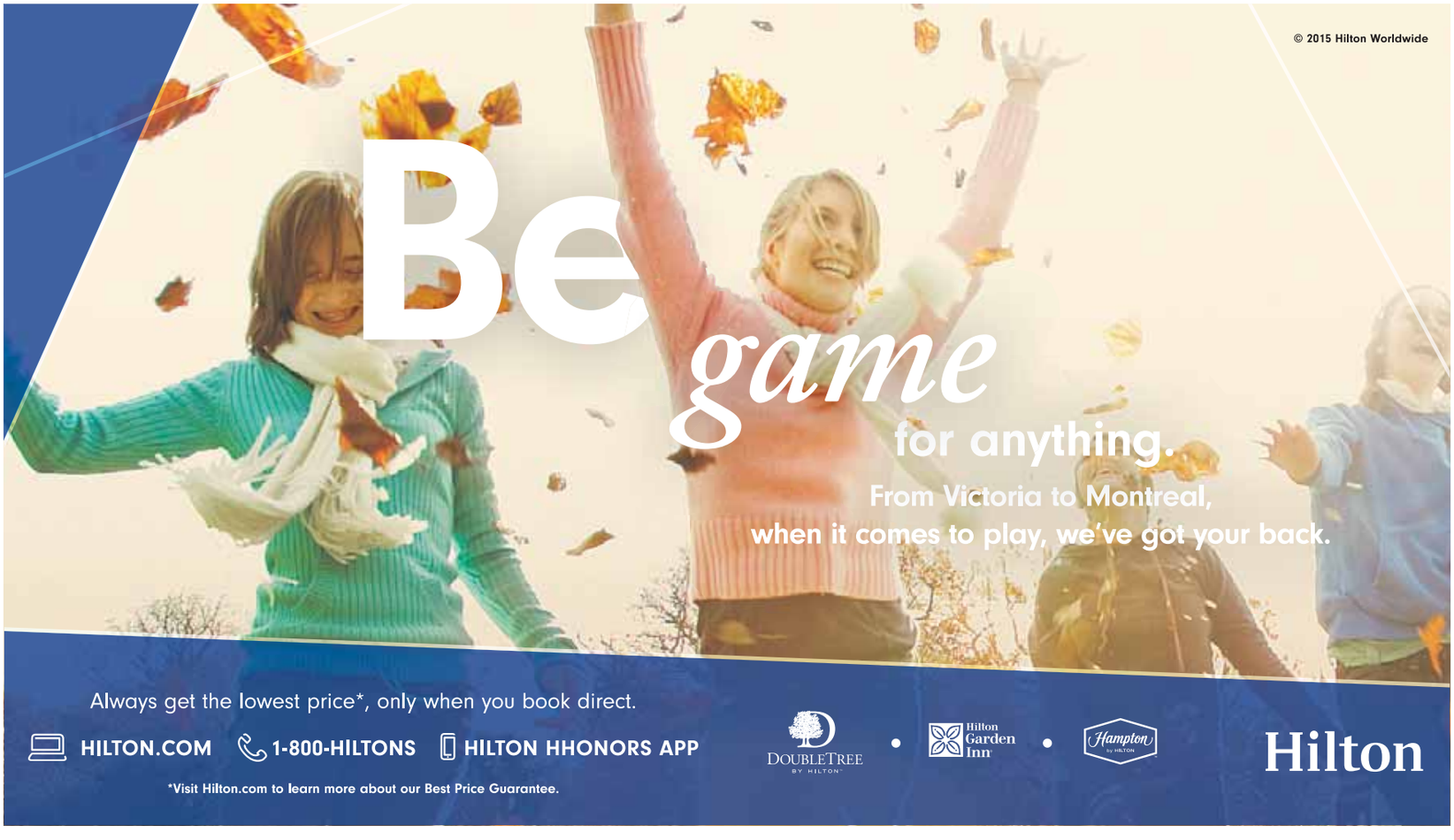
My favourite displays are the unconventional vehicles: the cello case sled used by Bond to slide away from armed guards in The Living Daylights; the Little Nellie auto gyro mini helicopter from You Only Live Twice; and the crocodile submarine from Octopussy. Apparently the filmmakers acquired a real crocodile for the scene, which then escaped and hibernated under the set, only to reappear two weeks later.

In addition to the vehicles, there are storyboards, scripts and a smattering of the costumes and props used during more than 50 years of Bond filmmaking. Video screens placed throughout play the relevant clips from the movies.

Located half a block from Covent Garden, a stop here will leave anyone interested in movie-making shaken and stirred.



The London Film Museum's Bond in Motion exhibit runs to March 2016. LOREN CHRISTIE/FOR METRO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Chicago feels the Force on museum

MOVIE ARTIFACTS

Council OKs George Lucas museum, but hurdles remain

The force — of Chicago's city council, at least — is with George Lucas, as aldermen voted Wednesday to allow the Star Wars filmmaker to build his $400-million museum along the shores of Lake Michigan.

With no discussion, the council cast the widely expected vote in favour of allowing Lucas to build his 300,000-square-foot Lucas Museum of Narrative Art just south of Soldier Field, home of the Chicago Bears.

Mayor Rahm Emanuel strongly endorsed the project and Lucas's choice of Chicago instead of San Francisco as the site for his museum was considered a major coup for the mayor, who earlier this year scored another victory when President Barack Obama selected Chicago as the site of his presidential library.

But as with that library, not everybody favours handing over city parkland for Lucas to build his museum. Non-profit group Friends of the Parks is suing in federal court to block the project and the two sides are due back in court Nov. 10.

Some questions and answers about the museum plan:

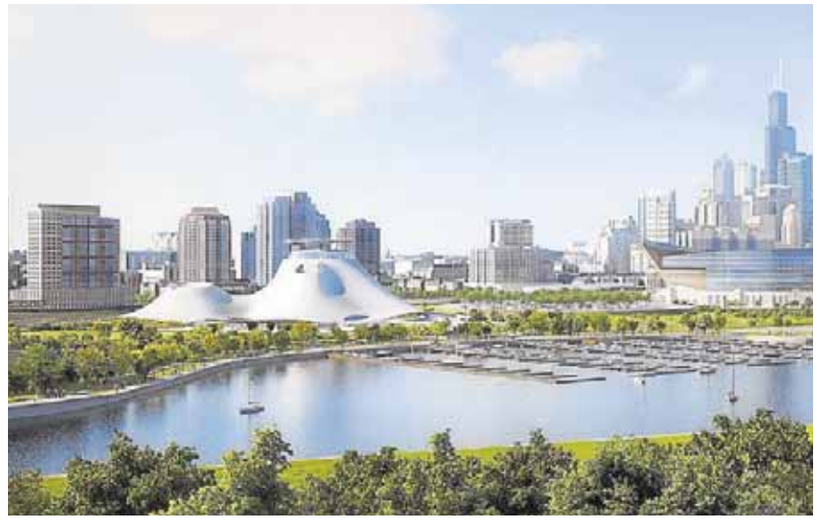
Why Chicago?

It seemed like San Francisco was a lock. After all, Lucas was born in California, Lucasfilm's visual effects division is based in the city and the headquarters of Lucasfilm and Skywalker Sound is across the Golden Gate Bridge in Marin County. But Lucas' wife, Mellody Hobson, is from Chicago. And when the two got married, they hosted a star-studded party there to celebrate after their California wedding.

Then there is Mayor Rahm Emanuel. The famously pushy mayor really wanted the museum and while San Francisco was "doodling around," as Lucas once said, Emanuel was getting the city to offer up a slice of real estate along the lake near attractions such as the Field Museum of Natural History and the Shedd Aquarium.

What will it look like?

It is no surprise that a filmmaker that introduced the world to Han Solo's Millennium Falcon and a droid named R2-D2 plans to house his collection in a futuristic building. The undulating structure will have an observation deck that resembles a floating disc. But the revised renderings also reflect the battle with those opposed to building a private museum on the city's cherished lakefront. About 100,000 square feet have been lopped off of the original planned 400,000-square-foot building, leaving more green space on the 17-acre site, which will include many trees, native plants and an outdoor plaza that leads up to the sloping face of the building.



Construction on the proposed Lucas Museum of Narrative Art, left, in Chicago could begin as early as next spring, with doors opening as soon as 2019, if things go according to plan.

LUCAS MUSEUM OF NARRATIVE ART VIA THE ASSOCIATED PRESS FILE

300K

The 300,000-square-feet undulating structure would sit on a 17-acre site on the Chicago lakefront. About 100,000 square feet were trimmed from the original plan to leave more green space.

What is going to be in the museum?

It may be officially called the Lucas Museum of Narrative Art, but it will almost certainly be known as the Star Wars Museum. That means there will be plenty of artifacts and costumes from the Star Wars films, and Lucas has said there will be artifacts from the Indiana Jones movies and other films. But along with props and story boards, the museum will also include three auditoriums where visitors can watch films and attend lectures and workshops. Not only that, but the museum will showcase artwork Lucas has been collecting since college, including illustrations by Norman Rockwell and N.C. Wyeth. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

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metro SPORTS

The Colorado Rockies have declined a $9-million mutual option on Justin Morneau and bought him out for $750,000

AA leaves everyone puzzled

BLUE JAYS

GM exits post with class but in a cloud of mystery

The same day he was named Major League Baseball's executive of the year, Alex Anthopoulos found himself trying to explain why he was facing unemployment.

In a surprising turn of events, the Toronto Blue Jays parted ways with their chief architect Thursday — less than a week after coming within one inning of forcing Game 7 in the American League Championship Series. Anthopoulos said it was his choice, with the final decision coming Wednesday afternoon.

"I just didn't feel like this was the right fit for me going forward," Anthopoulos told reporters in a conference call Thursday. "Not an easy (decision). Obviously everyone knows how I feel about the organization, the city, the country. By no means was this an easy decision but it was one that I felt I needed to make ... I own this decision. This is on me 100 per cent," he added.

It was a classy if confusing exit. Despite repeated questions, Anthopoulos did not elaborate on why he is leaving, other than to say that he wanted to be true to himself and that the impasse was not due to a financial disagreement. But the GM's departure comes during a changeover in Jays management with Mark Shapiro, the former Cleveland Indians president, taking over from the departing Paul Beeston as president and CEO.

"This decision is solely mine. Mark gave me every opportunity to return. He was sincere in wanting me back ... (Team owner) Rogers and Mark were more than generous, I mean extremely generous," added the Montreal native.

Anthopoulos left more questions than answers. He said he wanted to be back and that ownership and his new boss wanted him to stay. But clearly the team's new landscape was not one he could live with.

He declined to say why it was not a good fit. But he went out of his way to praise Shapiro and Rogers, stressing that the baseball team is in good hands.

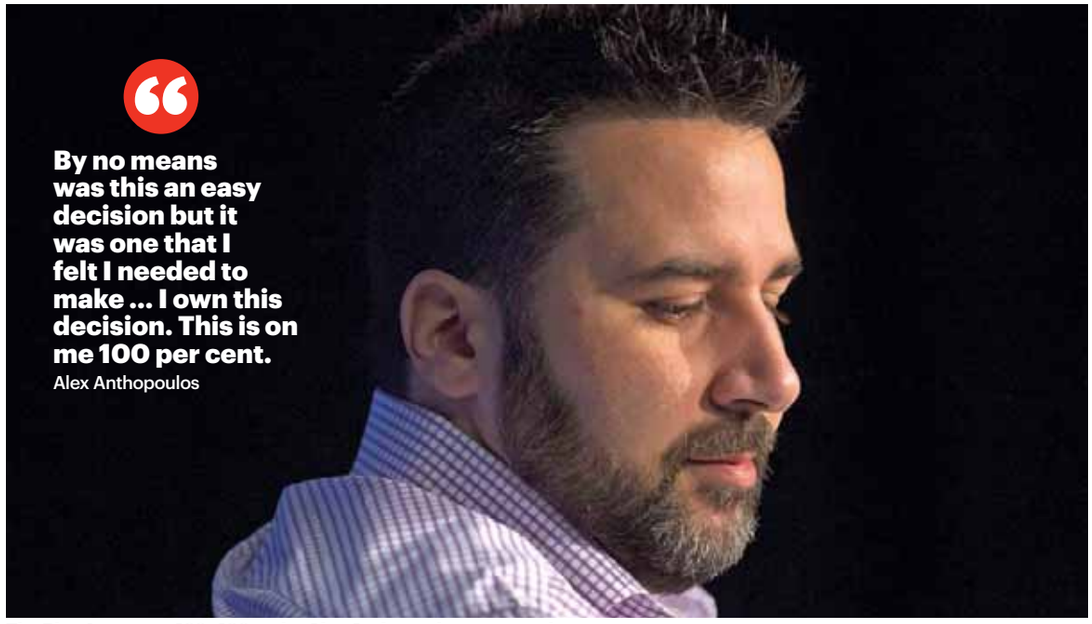
"I know this is not an easy day for anybody ... I don't think any of us wanted this to happen." Anthopoulos, 38, turned down a five-year contract extension, amid speculation of a difference in vision with Shapiro, who does not officially take up his new job until Monday. Unlike Beeston, Shapiro is a president immersed in the baseball side — and one who clearly has his own views on how to run a club. Shapiro and Anthopoulos don't appear to be on the same page, although Anthopoulos rejected the suggestion of a power struggle.

Anthopoulos said he did not have another job lined up, although he said his phone "exploded" Thursday once news of his pending departure broke.

Anthopoulos, then assistant general manager, took over as Toronto's GM in 2009 after J.P. Ricciardi was fired.

The Jays went 489-483 under Anthopoulos, according to Sportsnet stats, but soared into the playoffs this year after a 22-year absence.

THE CANADIAN PRESS


By no means was this an easy decision but it was one that I felt I needed to make ... I own this decision. This is on me 100 per cent.
Alex Anthopoulos

The Blue Jays went 489-483 under Alex Anthopoulos as general manager. CHRIS YOUNG/THE CANADIAN PRESS

SHORTLIST

Catcher Russell Martin, pitcher Mark Buehrle and centre-fielder Kevin Pillar were named Gold Glove Award finalists on Thursday.

FANS REACT ON TWITTER

@_rallycap
Now I finally understand all of Adele's songs. #BlueJays #AA

@MrArancini
The bluer jays are crazy letting #aa get away he's very knowledgeable, he's young and he's CANADIAN!!!!

@ManCaveMMA
Seems clear AA wants out. For whatever the reason is, Rogers can't change his mind. His choice. Move on. Nothing we can do #BlueJays

@RealMikeCeccato
What a mess in Toronto letting Anthopoulos walk like that its ridiculous, that wouldn't happen in any other city

@BillyComeau
Great first move @MarkShapiro. You and Rogers should give workshops on how to crush souls. AA for @BlueJays President! #BlueJays

@stefaloves
Anthopoulos is leaving the @bluejays and all of a sudden I am having trouble breathing. WHY, ALEX? WHY????

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Heat is on Mets rookie

WORLD SERIES

N.Y. counting on Syndergaard to help cut into K.C.'s 2-0 lead

Noah Syndergaard racked up 166 strikeouts in 150 innings during the regular season. MATT SLOCUM/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

The man-child on the mound was simply getting some work in, two simulated innings to keep sharp for the World Series.

It was late afternoon at Kauffman Stadium, dimmed by dark clouds on this overcast day in Kansas City, and even his New York Mets teammates wanted no part of six-foot-six Noah Syndergaard.

David Wright bounded into the batting cage, watched a few fastballs whizz by like pellets fired from a BB gun, and stepped right back out.

"How are you supposed to hit that?" he asked buddy Michael Cuddyer.

A chuckling group of Mets marvelled at Syndergaard's sizzling cheese the day before the Series opener — but now they've placed the heat squarely on their rookie starter. With the National League champs trailing 2-0 in the best-of-seven set, the 23-year-old thunderbolt aptly nicknamed Thor pitches Friday night against Royals right-hander Yordano Ventura.

And the Mets know perfectly well they can't afford to lose.

"I feel like being able to watch the past two games has really helped me out and helped me devise a game plan," Syndergaard said.

Syndergaard's fastball averaged 97.1 m.p.h. during the regular season, the highest velocity of any major leaguer who pitched at least 150 innings, according to STATS.

The 24-year-old Ventura ranked third at 96.3 m.p.h.

In the NL playoffs, Syndergaard threw 22 pitches at least 100 m.p.h. and topped out at 101, STATS said.

Ventura can touch the century mark, too.

But while Syndergaard certainly brings it, so do Mets aces Matt Harvey and Jacob deGrom. And despite their 95-98 m.p.h. fastballs, neither one was able to throttle a Royals lineup that's mastered the lost art of consistently making solid contact.

> **He's a very fast learner. He has no fear.**
> Mets manager Terry Collins

Alex Gordon hit a tying homer in the ninth inning of Game 1 on a 97 m.p.h. quick-pitch from New York closer Jeurys Familia.

"We're always ready for the fastball," Gordon explained. "Never miss a fastball and adjust to off-speed."

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

RUGBY WORLD CUP

All Blacks, Aussies in mouthwatering final

The two best teams in the tournament. Nos. 1 and 2 in the world. Archrivals. Neighbours. Records at stake.

The Rugby World Cup may just have its perfect final.

At the end of a tournament dominated by the southern hemisphere, New Zealand and Australia have proved the most durable and incisive over the six weeks, and the trans-Tasman rivals head to Twickenham on Saturday bidding to win rugby's grandest prize for a record third time.

3.5

Number of turnovers Australia's key No.8 David Pocock is averaging per game at the World Cup.

It's the fourth time they have each reached the final but they have never met there, adding to the sense of occasion for one of the biggest events in sports.

Rugby World Cup finals have tended to be tight, tense games — the 2011 final finished 8-7 and two of the previous four didn't contain a try — but this showpiece promises to be different, with both sides preferring an expansive game and the weather in London forecast to be dry and an unseasonal 20 degrees (68 F).

The All Blacks have proved they can counter any style, any weather condition, and almost every opponent by losing just three of their 53 games since lifting the Webb Ellis Cup four years ago on home soil.

The final will be the Wallabies' fifth straight match at Twickenham and the neutrals may just be on their side, hoping for a close match, with New Zealand having only lost one of the last 12 meetings with their neighbours.

That, however, came in the deciding match of the Rugby Championship in August, and the 27-19 win in Sydney will give the Wallabies confidence that the All Blacks juggernaut can be stopped.

New Zealand's key men on the day will be flyhalf Dan Carter and captain Richie McCaw while Australia will look to their talented No.8 David Pocock and Adam Ashley-Cooper who scored a hat trick in the semifinals against Argentina. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

IN BRIEF

Homan still unbeaten at Grand Slam of curling

Ottawa's Rachel Homan remains undefeated after nine draws of round-robin play at the Grand Slam of Curling Masters tournament.

Homan (3-0) scored two in the sixth end and added one in the eighth to top Sweden's Margaretha Sigfridsson (0-3) 5-3 in her match on Thursday.

Winnipeg's Jennifer Jones improved to 2-0 with a 9-2 victory over Switzerland's Alina Paets in Draw 7 while Val Sweeting (2-0) of Edmonton toppled Binia Feltscher of Switzerland 8-2 in the morning draw. THE CANADIAN PRESS

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RECIPE Sweet Potato and Kale Frittata

PHOTO: MAYA VISNYEI

Ceri Marsh & Laura Keogh
For Metro Canada

This savory breakfast for dinner is as healthy as it is satisfying.

Ready in
Prep time: 20 minutes
Serves 4

Ingredients
- 1 Tbsp butter
- 1 yellow onion, chopped
- 1 pound frozen chopped kale
- 3 cloves garlic, chopped
- 2 cups boiled diced sweet potato (about 1 large potato)
- 2 whole eggs, 2 egg whites
- 2 Tbsp milk
- 1 tspn fresh, chopped parsley

Directions
1. Preheat oven to 400 F.
2. In an ovenproof skillet, melt butter over medium heat. Add onions and cook until soft, about 5 minutes. Add garlic and kale and cook until garlic fragrant and kale wilted.
3. Add potatoes and soften, about 3 to 5 minutes.
4. Meanwhile, whisk eggs, whites and milk. Pour egg mixture over potatoes and kale, and cook on stovetop another 3 minutes. Sprinkle with parsley.
5. Transfer skillet to oven and bake about 6 to 8 minutes or until eggs are set.

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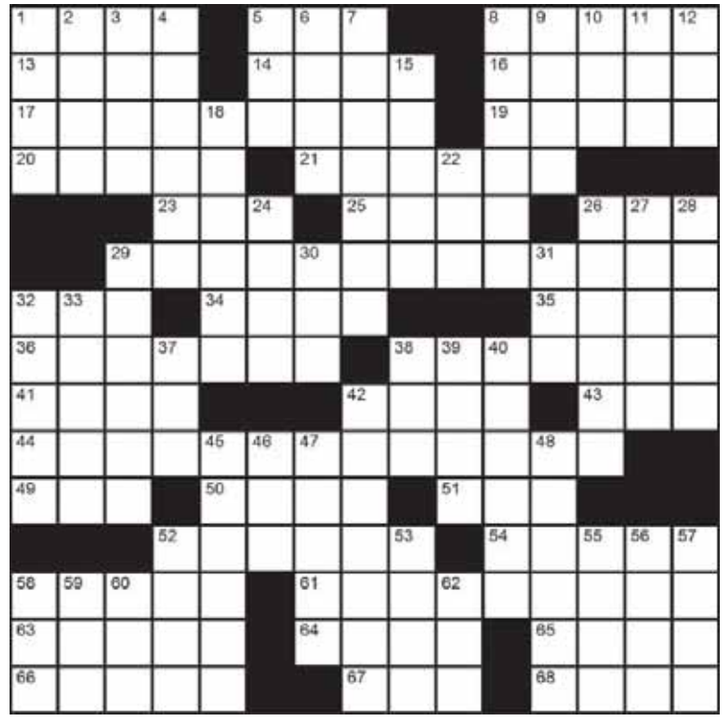
CROSSWORD Canada Across and Down

BY KELLY ANN BUCHANAN



ACROSS
1. Computer network signal
5. Roman Numeral for 905
8. Apparition in the attic
13. Prayer sign-off
14. Pea: French
16. "I, Frankenstein" (2014) star Mr. Eckhart
17. Grave marker
19. Surnamesakes of Paul of "Halloween: The Curse of Michael Myers" (1995)
20. Peel off the paint
21. Scan the webpage
23. Vancouver-born actor Mr. Bellows of 2012 horror "House at the End of the Street"
25. Ornamental case
26. Ms. West
29. Sci-Fi horror of 1978 starring Donald Sutherland, "Invasion of the __ __"
32. Swiss river, variantly
34. QED's 'E'
35. Discharge
36. Schedule
38. Shiver from fright
41. Dr. Frankenstein's pal
42. Mr. Astin of 2007 thriller "Borderland"
43. 'Baron' suffix
44. Halloween decoration creator, perhaps: 2 wds.
49. poet mr. cummings'
50. Hair removal brand
51. German article
52. Facade
54. Frightening/supernatural
58. Insipid
61. Witch's brew pots
63. Bubbling in the pot
64. "Scream Queens" star Ms. Roberts
65. Feed fully
66. Devil costume accessories
67. Operative
68. Slangy 'sures'

DOWN
1. Crying sounds
2. "_ __ a traveller from an antique land..." - Percy Bysshe Shelley, Ozymandias
3. Horror movie emotion
4. Deep blue
5. Mil. rank
6. Heard in herds
7. "House on Haunted Hill" (1959) star Mr. Price
8. It repels vampires
9. Transport stuff
10. Sequence, for short
11. Lay grass
12. Heavy wts.
15. Mattress brand
18. Creepy crawler
22. "Leave!"
24. Vega constellation
26. Club's one-of-some
27. Botanical casings
28. Rob of 2011 mysterious TV movie "The Edge of the Garden"
29. Accessories with witches costumes
30. "Dead Calm" (1989) star Mr. Neill
31. Pants part
32. Smoke _ __ (Emulate Sherlock Holmes)
33. Fight
37. Association, variantly [abbr.]
38. Coffee alternative
39. Scarce
40. Begrudged
42. Shrieks
45. Solemn bell sounds
46. _ McKellen, star of 1983 frightful flick "The Keep"
47. The actress at #64-Across, to Julia
48. Power
52. Egotistical
53. Cut of beef
55. Part
56. __ to one's neck
57. Approximations [abbr.]
58. "Phooey!"
59. Blood-typing letters
60. _'easter
62. Set down

IT'S ALL IN THE STARS by Sally Brompton

Aries March 21 - April 20
You will get the chance to make a breakthrough. However, you must be aware of your limits and you must not push yourself too hard. You don't have to work 24/7 to be a success.

Taurus April 21 - May 21
Partners and colleagues may have the upper hand but that does not mean you are powerless. The planets suggest that if you believe in yourself you can make things happen.

Gemini May 22 - June 21
You have done wrong but won't be punished for it — provided you admit your mistake. According to the planets your latest transgression is too big to ignore but still small enough to be forgiven.

Cancer June 22 - July 23
Get out and about and have a good time. You will find it easy to meet new people and make new friends and, through them, to attract new opportunities. The more you socialize the more you will accomplish.

Leo July 24 - Aug. 23
Spend money on yourself. You are entitled to enjoy what you've earned. Be the one who benefits, not those who like to sponge off you.

Virgo Aug. 24 - Sept. 23
Don't try to get approval for what you are planning — you will make more of an impression if you just get on and do it. Strike out in a new direction — chances are you won't be travelling alone for long.

Libra Sept. 24 - Oct. 23
This will be a rather quiet time by your standards but that's good. You have a lot to think about. The more you reflect upon your goals now the more likely it is you will reach them.

Scorpio Oct. 24 - Nov. 22
You may be willing to make sacrifices above and beyond the call of duty but you can't do it all on your own. There are lots of people who think like you and share your vision — join forces with them.

Sagittarius Nov. 23 - Dec. 21
You will deal well with challenges today. According to the planets you are determined to prove that you have what it takes to succeed — prove it to the world and yourself as well.

Capricorn Dec. 22 - Jan. 20
You are in no mood to let others dictate what you can and cannot think, and that's good, but remember that it works both ways: others are entitled to their opinions too.

Aquarius Jan. 21 - Feb. 19
What you're offered may be tempting but are the likely returns worth the time and the energy you will have to put in? If the answer is in doubt it might be wise to pass up the offer.

Pisces Feb. 20 - March 20
You will be amazingly confident today, thanks to the Sun's link with your ruling planet Neptune. There is nothing you cannot accomplish if you believe in yourself. Romantically, too, this is a time for taking chances.

CONCEPTIS SUDOKU by Dave Green

Every row, column and box contains 1-9

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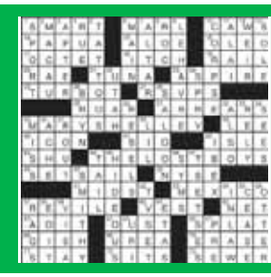

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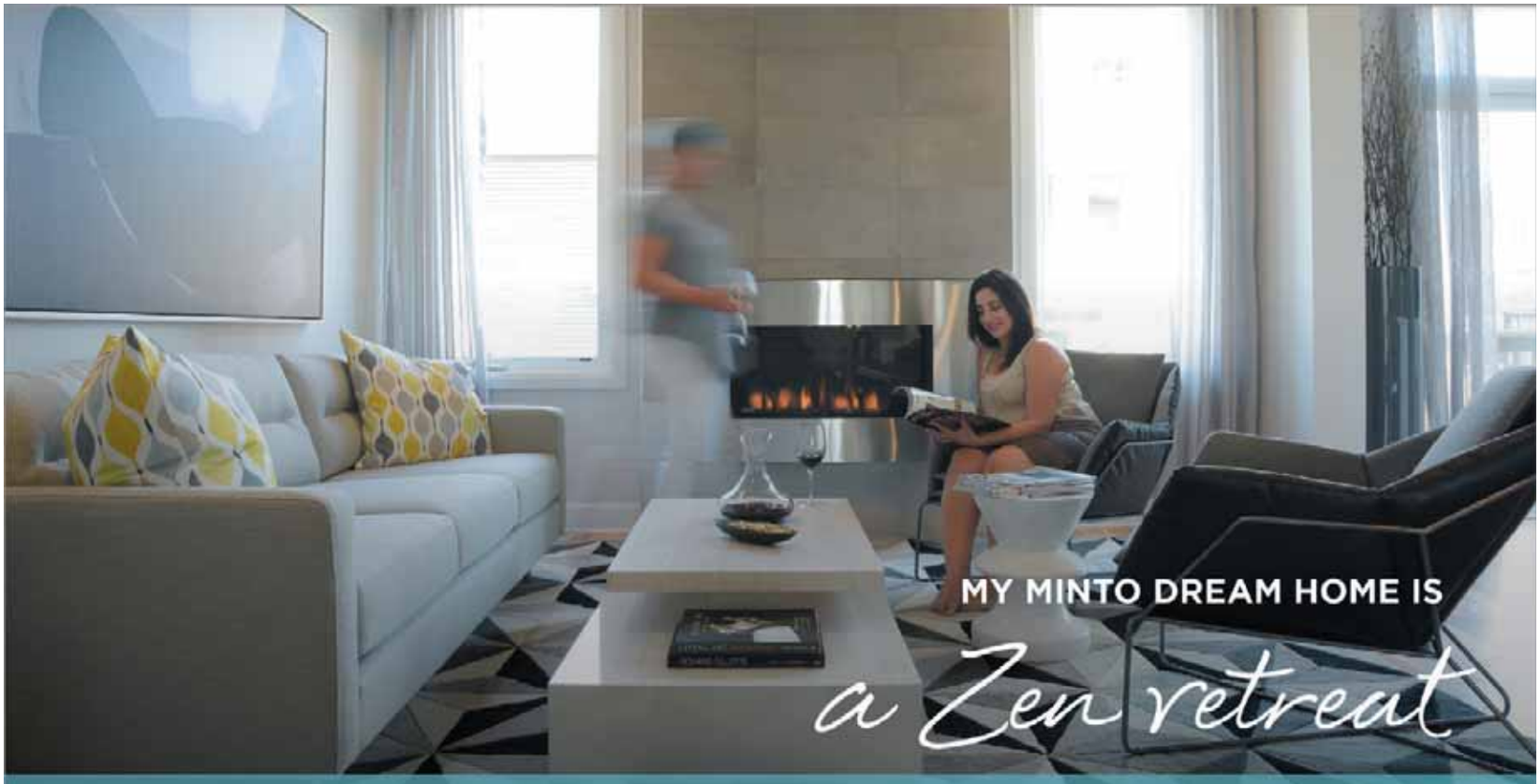

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